

BETWEEN ART AND REALITY: A COMPARISON OF THE IDEOLOGICAL
DEVELOPMENT OF ERNST TOLLER AND GEORG KAISER

John Harrison

Ph.D.

University of Edinburgh

1988



To Geraldine and Patrick

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful above all to Professor N.A. Furness for his advice and help with locating sources. My thanks are also due to Walter Huder and the staff of the Georg-Kaiser-Archiv and Sammlung Ernst Toller in Berlin, and to the Deutsches Exilarchiv, Deutsche Bibliothek, Frankfurt am Main. I would also like to express my gratitude to my mother, Angela Harrison, whose typing skills proved invaluable, and to my wife Geraldine for her constant support and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

This study compares the ideological development of two German playwrights who lived through the same era: Ernst Toller (1893-1939) and Georg Kaiser (1878-1945). It shows that Kaiser underwent considerable development - a matter of debate among critics - and that his ideas gradually became more realistic and approached those of Toller, whose work also grew appreciably in realism over the years. Critics have never doubted that Toller developed ideologically, but they have often failed to show it fully. A comparison with Toller enables us to ascertain the extent of Kaiser's socio-political concern.

Kaiser's perception of industrial capitalist society as repressive and war-mongering grows more slowly than Toller's. Several parallels exist between each writer's treatment of revolution: neither ever manages fully to overcome doubts about the effectiveness of material change; both accept revolutionary violence, yet express reservations about its moral implications; to both, the concerns of the individual remain important.

There are significant differences too, though we find Kaiser approaching Toller. Kaiser abandons the benevolent revolutionary-from-above in favour of revolutionaries-from-below; Toller initially envisages intellectual bourgeois revolutionaries like himself, but they become working-class after Masse Mensch. Unlike Toller however, Kaiser seems unable to combine realism and optimism before 1933.

Kaiser first achieves this combination in exile. Hitler's Machtergreifung profoundly influenced the ideological development of both writers. Though they had concurred on several aspects of art's function before 1933, they had disagreed on the artist's moral obligations: Nazism forced Kaiser to rethink his position and adopt Toller's notion of the politically involved writer, after he had initially underestimated the Nazi threat. Toller never underestimates this threat: while his views on pacifism and the artist's role remain constant, he devotes his energies to the fight against Hitler to the extent of publicly distancing himself from socialism. Kaiser has also been seen to regress ideologically in the face of Nazism and war, but this study shows that he endorsed a revolutionary socialism which Toller had already advocated in the late 1920's.

Yet this politicisation was never supported by real faith in mankind. Toller always maintained a warm affection for humanity, while Kaiser, even at his most political, remained derisive toward the masses.

Despite this crucial difference in outlook, and the sense of purpose Toller was able to glean from his moral/political concept of art - a concept Kaiser struggled to adopt - neither writer was able to avoid disillusionment.

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INTRODUCTION

Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser both became famous as dramatists of Expressionism, yet both survived that artistic movement to become the best-known and most successful playwrights of the Weimar Republic. Both were born of middle-class parents, and yet both took up a revolutionary, anti-establishment standpoint in their work. In Toller's case this outlook was determined by the horrors he experienced in the First World War. Before the War, he had sought acceptance within a society from which he felt isolated. He was born in Samotschin, Posen - a province now part of Poland - where he was cut off from the Germans because of his Jewish ancestry and from the Polish community because of his German nationality. In 1914 he greeted Kaiser Wilhelm's call to unity - "Ich kenne keine Parteien mehr" - with great enthusiasm, but his experiences on the Western Front proved sobering. Toller subsequently translated his longing for Gemeinschaft - via pacifism and socialism - into an ideal embracing all humanity. Kaiser also felt alienated by Wilhelmine society, but did not feel isolated: he sought escape rather than acceptance. He emigrated to Buenos Aires, worked there for the firm AEG, and felt he gained greater insight into Germany through his detachment: "Denn es bleibt dies notwendig: sich zu entfernen, um tiefer zurückzukehren."¹ Kaiser only began to write seriously when he returned to Germany: his non-conformist spirit bred a deep distrust of contemporary capitalist society. Their left-wing positions and their opposition to war and militarism meant both Toller and Kaiser found themselves banned from the stage by the Nazis in 1933. Both were forced into foreign exile; neither

ever returned to Germany. This study will compare the lives and works of these two dramatists, and will assess their ideological development through the years, but before considering its aims in greater detail we must first review the critical reception of both writers.

Trends in the Critical Reception of Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser.

A similar development takes place in the reception of both Toller and Kaiser: not only were both writers considered for years to be purely Expressionist dramatists, but their reputations suffered from misconceptions which took considerable time to overcome. Kaiser was seen as a cold theoretician, as a 'Denkspieler', a term coined by Bernhard Diebold, while Toller was until recently viewed as a quasi-religious dreamer, whose grip on political reality was seen as tenuous. Ironically, the misconceptions surrounding both writers are rooted in statements they themselves made.

Walter Sokel, who describes Toller as "ein religiöser Dichter, einer, dessen tiefstes Anliegen religio, Bindung, ist,"² attempts to prove this idea by quoting from Toller's own "Bemerkungen zu meinem Drama Die Wandlung" (1919): "Voraussetzung des politischen Dichters (der stets irgendwie religiöser Dichter ist): ein Mensch, der sich verantwortlich fühlt für sich und für jeden Bruder menschheitlicher Gemeinschaft."³ Even this passage, however, actually represents an attempt by Toller to define his concept of the political artist. Other parts of the same piece show a very clear-headed, realistic, political Toller:

1917 war das Drama für mich Flugblatt. Ich las Szenen daraus vor im Kreise junger Menschen in Heidelberg und wollte sie aufwühlen ('aufhetzen')

gegen den Krieg!)), ich fuhr nach der Ausweisung aus Heidelberg nach Berlin und las hier wieder das Stück. Immer mit der Absicht, Dumpfe aufzurütteln, Widerstrebende zum Marschieren zu bewegen, Tastenden den Weg zu zeigen... und sie alle zu gewinnen für revolutionäre sachliche Kleinarbeit. (GW II, p. 360).

Despite such statements, and despite the less idealistic dramatic writing which followed the first plays, Toller was not evaluated as a political writer in early criticism. Far more attention was paid to the early Expressionist works than to Toller's post-prison work. William A. Willibrand writes of Die Wandlung, for example: "The revolutionary idea is transfigured by the ideals of Christianity."⁴ Willibrand, who completed the first dissertation on Toller, Ernst Toller and His Ideology (1945), interprets, without any real justification, Toller's insistence on a morally informed socialism and rejection of strict materialist dogma as commitment to Christianity. Of Toller's anti-Nazism he writes: "Ideologically, Toller's opposition to Nazism was of a combined humanitarian and Christian inspiration."⁵ At another point, Willibrand speaks of the "dynamic influence of Judeo-Christianity" on Toller's works.⁶

Willibrand may not do justice to Toller's commitment to revolutionary socialism, but his view of Toller is sympathetic. Other early criticism of Toller, on the other hand, is very harsh indeed. These judgements spring from critics' lack of sympathy for Toller's ideas. In contemporary criticism this animosity is quite understandable, as critics are bound to review the work of writers who are of a different political and aesthetic persuasion. One such contemporary critic is Julius Bab, whose description of Toller as a well-meaning but untalented writer is typical of early critical opinion: "Sachlich liegt der Fall Toller

also in meiner Erkenntnis so, daß dieser ehrliche und warme Enthusiast überall an der Schwäche seiner Begabung scheitern muß."⁷ It soon becomes apparent that Bab's criticism is the result of a rigid idea of the separate identities of art and politics, which leads him to regard Toller as a dilettante "der als Politiker träumt und als Poet politisiert."⁸ What is less understandable is that such views have been uncritically taken over by writers of dissertations. Thus Francis P. Andersen, who limits himself primarily to a discussion of Toller's language, believes that Toller's work is the product of an untalented writer because it is "preaching".⁹ An attempt to evaluate the content of Toller's plays is made by Rainer Hagen. Hagen's lack of sympathy for Toller is demonstrated not least by the fact that he is shocked by the nature of Hinkemann's mutilation: "Toller hat dieses Schicksal sehr direkt dargestellt und es ist ihm nicht gelungen, seine Anstößigkeit durch eine wirklich künstlerische Gestaltung abzumildern."¹⁰ The plays which Hagen sees as political - Die Maschinenstürmer (1920-21) and Feuer aus den Kesseln (1930) - are described as "künstlerisch bedeutungslos", and his first plays are seen as being of little political value.¹¹ Despite the fact that Hagen concedes one play to be both politically and artistically interesting - Hoppla, wir leben! (1927), seen only as so being because it was 'co-written with Erwin Piscator'¹² - he essentially, like Bab before him, cannot accept Toller's concept of political writing which is independent of dogma. Werner Malzacher also pronounces negative and unsympathetic judgements on Toller: these are so harsh that one cannot help but wonder what ever attracted this student to Toller in the first place. Toller the political writer and activist is dismissed utterly: "Der Politiker Toller ist für uns noch unbedeutender geworden als er es

ohnedies und immer schon war."¹³ The complete lack of understanding for Toller's political position in this dissertation emerges clearly from Malzacher's critique of the polling-booth scene in Hoppla, wir leben!. Malzacher believes Toller is attacking democracy per se: "All die Einwände, die Toller in Hoppla, wir leben! gegen die Demokratie erhebt, sind weder berechtigt noch haltbar, noch stehen sie in Einklang mit seiner eigenen grundsätzlichen Überzeugung."¹⁴ In fact, Toller's criticism is directed at cynical bourgeois manipulation of the democratic idea; Malzacher sets 'democracy' equal with parliamentary democracy,¹⁵ and consequently concludes that these attacks on a bourgeois system are not in keeping with Toller's true ideas. Even where sympathetic judgements are made on Toller, they continue to betray a lack of understanding for his ideological standpoint; Willibrand feels for example that the "war experience did not make Toller a radical,"¹⁶ referring to Toller's refusal to endorse Marxist doctrine.

Marxist criticism has also contributed to the picture of Toller as a politically unrealistic dreamer, despite Martin Reso's sympathetic interpretation of Toller's life and work, Der gesellschaftlich-ethische Protest im dichterischen Werk Ernst Tollers (1957). Reso's article, "Die Novemberrevolution und Ernst Toller" (1959) must be seen as a rather crass attempt to 'correct' the lack of ideological 'clarity' in his dissertation. In the article we find the following dogmatic statement: "Der fehlende Klassenstandpunkt äußert sich am krassesten in der Ablehnung der Partei als Vortrupp der Massen,"¹⁷ whereas Reso had postulated two years earlier in his dissertation: "Daß es Toller niemals um die Gestaltung von partei-politischen Fragen gegangen ist, hat er mehrfach betont. Man tut ihm daher Unrecht, wenn

man solches aus seinem Werk herausliest."¹⁸ It is without doubt statements like this which led Hans Marnette to criticise Reso's entire approach: "Die Arbeit zeigt vor allem Schwächen bei der Anwendung der Methode des dialektischen Materialismus in der Literaturwissenschaft."¹⁹ In general, Marnette attacks Toller's 'failure' to acknowledge Marxist doctrine and the leading role of the party, while Alfred Klein's judgement typifies the Marxist picture of Toller at this time²⁰ as being no more than emotionally engaged: "Die Ablehnung der alten Gesellschaft ist bei Ernst Toller ethisch begründet, er verdammt sie aus moralischer Verachtung des Krieges und der Kriegsgewinnler."²¹ Willibrand would no doubt agree, but would evaluate such a position positively; neither critic takes sufficient account of Toller's commitment to material socialism.

More recent criticism has attempted to do justice to Toller's writing. A new approach was initiated by John Spalek's aptly-titled article, "Ernst Toller: The Need for a New Estimate"²² (1966), after which Toller's plays were taken more seriously, and evaluated with less prejudice.²³ Dorothea Klein, for example, attempts to show the consistent development of Toller's ideology until 1930. Her analysis is interesting, but is weakened by ignoring the exile years and uncritically accepting the fact that Toller's comedies have always been seen as secondary in Toller research "und sich keine Anhaltspunkte dafür ergeben, daß diese Einstufung modifiziert werden müßte."²⁴ Carel ter Haar's study, Ernst Toller - Appell oder Resignation? (1977) sees Toller's socialism as an escape from isolation. Ter Haar believes that Toller became more and more disillusioned with socialism; in view of this conclusion, it is curious that ter Haar virtually disregards the exile years, when Toller turned his back on revolutionary

ideas.²⁵ More complete studies have been produced by Thomas Bütow - Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers (1972, published 1975) -, Rosemarie Altenhofer - Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik (1976) -, and Richard Dove - Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller (1986). Bütow, as the title of his dissertation implies, sees an unresolvable conflict running through Toller's work, springing from the conflict between poet and politician within Toller himself. Altenhofer prefers to label Toller a political "Chronist und Analytiker"²⁶ rather than a "Bekenntnisdramatiker"; she believes that the tendency to belittle the political aspects of Toller's writing was largely a result of critics attributing too much importance to the autobiographical, confessional elements of Die Wandlung. Later plays, Altenhofer asserts, were interpreted in the light of these autobiographical parallels. Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik is convincing and takes all of Toller's drama into account, even those plays conventionally regarded as minor and unimportant. The dissertation's only weakness is that, with the exception of Briefe aus dem Gefängnis, it rather neglects Toller's nonfictional writing, despite Altenhofer's acknowledgement of its importance.²⁷ Richard Dove does take account of these writings, for he shows how Toller's ideological development is reflected in both the plays and the political articles and speeches.

We have seen that the concept of Toller as an essentially religious writer can be justified to a certain extent by Toller's own words. The idea of Kaiser as a 'Denkspieler' also arose from a statement made by Kaiser himself: "Da befriedigt Schauspiel tiefere Begierde: ins Denk-Spiel sind wir eingezogen und bereits erzogen aus karger Schau-Lust zu glückvoller Denk-Lust." (Werke

IV, p. 545). Clearly Kaiser's concern here is to challenge the audience into greater intellectual participation in the drama they are watching; as such, Kaiser's use of the term "Denk-Spiel" is allied to Brecht's concept of Epic Theatre, and has nothing whatever to do with Diebold's use of the term. Nevertheless, "Denk-Spiel" was adopted to describe a writer who, Diebold felt, had faith only in experimentation: "Glaubt er sein Ja? Glaubt er sein Nein? O er kommt nur zum Sagen, nicht zum Glauben."²⁸ It is true that Kaiser's plays are abstract inventions: unlike Toller's works, they rarely reflect Kaiser's own experience. To that extent they are 'Denkspiele', but the passion which emanates from them is self-evident. Diebold had actually devoted a chapter of his book Anarchie im Drama, published in 1921, to Kaiser, and had called it: "Georg Kaiser der Denkspieler." The notion that Kaiser was a cool mathematician of the stage is older, however. In 1918 Gustav Landauer, whose anarcho-socialist work Aufruf zum Sozialismus (1911) profoundly influenced the young Toller and inspired the anarchist ideas advocated by the Billionaire's Son in Gas²⁹ (1918), defended Kaiser against the charge of being cold and unfeeling:

Geistige Probleme³⁰ sind es, die Kaiser in Gegensätzen zwischen den Menschen lebendig werden. Von mancher Seite will man das nicht zugeben; man meint, er sei vorwiegend intellektuell, kühl, kalkulatorisch. [...] es täte uns Deutschen gut, wenn wir lernten, einem Dichter Wärme, Gewalt, Ursprünglichkeit nicht darum abzusprechen, weil er ein Künstler ist. Jedes Geformte wirkt, gegen das Wogende, Drängende, Naturalistische oder Unreife gehalten, kühl; jede dramatische Form ist Komposition und Kombination; und dieses technische Element fällt jedem sofort heraus, der mit Inhalt und Rhythmus nicht mitzuschwingen vermag; und jeder neue Geist, sei er noch so stark mit Empfindung und Wollen, mit Vision und Prophetie geladen, wirkt auf

den, der widerstrebt oder nicht mitkann,
als kalt und intellektuell.³¹

Reviews in the post-war German press show how the label 'Denkspieler' stuck to Kaiser,³² despite critics' repeated rejections of the term through the years. In 1928, for example, Hermann Kasack wrote the following: "Hinter der Kälte, die man vielfach seinen Figuren vorwirft, und die seine Werke charakterisiert, verbirgt sich ein großes dichterisches Feuer, das Feuer des Eros, ein leidenschaftliches Pathos..."³³ Leroy Linick claimed in 1938: "Nun ist die Bezeichnung 'Denkspieler' nicht ganz falsch, aber noch weniger ist sie richtig,"³⁴ while in 1955 Robert Kauf asserted: "No glib technician could have produced the impassioned outcries of the last poems."³⁵ Hermann Kesten also defends Kaiser; like Landauer he points out that artistic talent should be regarded as an asset (but he succeeds chiefly in confirming the 'Denkspieler' myth): "Als ob in der Kunst das Können nicht zu den großen Vorzügen zählte! Als ob der ästhetische Genuß nicht, unter anderm, auch eben in der Freude am formal Vollendeten, am ausgerechnet Formalhaften, am mathematisch Stimmigen beruhte!"³⁶

It is interesting that Diebold holds cool craftsmanship against Kaiser, just as a lack of formal talent is often held against Toller. Sokel actually compares Toller to Kaiser briefly and concludes: "Toller ist oft als Dichter tiefer und ergreifender als Kaiser; als Sprachkünstler aber ist ihm Kaiser überlegen."³⁷ In other words, Sokel believes that Kaiser's work lacks the sincerity of Toller's drama, despite its formal accomplishments. Criticism of Kaiser's work in exile often reflects the same charge: it is seen as the product of a man whose arrogance and insincerity prevented him from rising to the political challenge

of Nazism.³⁸ This charge, inextricably linked to the 'Denkspieler' idea, will be investigated in this study: a comparison with Toller - whose sincerity is never doubted - can be of particular help here.

The sheer volume of Kaiser's work, and its apparent diversity in theme gave rise to the idea that Kaiser could not possibly care about the problems he treats in his plays. Diebold believed - as early as 1924, when Kaiser still had some thirty plays ahead of him - that the critic can only be bewildered when confronted with Kaiser's oeuvre: "Ist das Größe oder Zerfahrenheit? Chaotische Überfülle oder Armut an künstlerischem Charakter?"³⁹ In his 1957 study, Georg Kaiser, B.J. Kenworthy pinpoints two "fundamentally different [...] approaches" in Kaiser's work: "on the one hand there are the 'social' plays, [...] and on the other, the works where the individual discovers his own reality in a Kleistian inner world of emotional, subjective truth."⁴⁰ Ruth Schwertfeger uses the terms 'Idee' and 'Vision' to describe what is essentially the same division,⁴¹ whereas Ernst Schürer sees an unresolvable dichotomy in Kaiser's work:

Der Wunsch dieser Figuren, aller Wirklichkeit den Eingang zu ihrem Reich zu versperren und fern der Welt zu leben, läßt sich schlecht vereinbaren mit ihrer Behauptung, die Welt verändern zu wollen. [...] Es sind zwei völlig entgegengesetzte und letztlich unvereinbare Ideen.⁴²

Kenworthy sees diverse and contradictory themes existing side-by-side in Kaiser's work:

Kaiser was the 'Denkspieler' who made romantic love the theme of many of his plays; he was a social reformer who denied any wish to appear as a 'benefactor of mankind', and at the same time a dreaming escapist with an uneasy social conscience...⁴³

We shall see that contradiction and paradox are integral elements of Kaiser's work; nevertheless, Kenworthy's statement is an example, as indeed is his entire thematic method, of a common idea in Kaiser reception. The various themes are seen to exist alongside one another, rather than the product of chronological development. Linick describes Kaiser as a "von Pol zu Pol flackernder Geist."⁴⁴ Walter Sokel sees "constant wavering"⁴⁵ as a prominent feature of Kaiser's work. Once again, we find that Kaiser himself contributed to this idea:

Es gibt durchaus kein Nacheinander - ich unterlasse es, die sehr zufällige Gelegenheit der Formung für großartig zu nehmen - ein Nebeneinander ist festzustellen, in dem das volle Oeuvre des ausgesponnenen Lebens schon im festen Bezirk umgrenzt ist. (Werke IV, p. 551).

Wolfgang Paulsen's book, Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes (1960) takes a similarly thematic approach: Kaiser's work is seen as a cerebral product devoid not of influence from German literary tradition, but from historical circumstances. Ernst Schürer's comparatively recent study, Georg Kaiser (1971), takes account of Kaiser's chronological development to a certain extent, but also approaches its subject matter thematically. Chapter headings such as "Worlds of the Mind" or "The Revolt Against War" reflect this fact. Certainly it is true that Kaiser's work does not reflect contemporary reality as clearly as Toller's, and that certain contradictory artistic statements were written at roughly the same time, thus making an assessment of Kaiser's ideological development through the years more difficult; nevertheless, this study will show that certain developments occur within Kaiser's work, and that these developments were at least partly influenced by external reality.

Despite the abundance of seemingly contradictory ideas in Kaiser's work, critics have attempted to identify predominant themes: the most common are 'regeneration of man' and 'flight from reality'. The 'regeneration of man' was described by Kaiser himself as the principal theme of all his writing: "Von welcher Art ist die Vision? Es gibt nur eine: die von der Erneuerung des Menschen." (Werke IV, p. 549). There is scarcely a critic who fails to address this theme: Manfred Kuxdorf, for example, regards it as applicable to all of Kaiser's dramatic work.⁴⁶ But despite Kaiser's own insistence that 'regeneration' dominates his work, many critics identify 'flight' as the major theme; often this idea is not even seen to co-exist equally with the theme of regeneration (as for example Kenworthy, Schwertfeger and Schürer view it: see quotations no. 40, 41 and 42 above). One of the earliest studies on Kaiser to be published after his death in 1945 was Eric A. Fivian's work, Georg Kaiser und seine Stellung im Expressionismus. This study sees Kaiser's plays as "ungelebte Möglichkeiten": "ein Gedanke jagt den andern, und immer weiter entfernen sie sich von der Wirklichkeit dieser Welt."⁴⁷ Wolfgang Fix, who concludes in his dissertation Die Ironie im Werke Georg Kaisers that regeneration, despite Kaiser's "ironische Grundhaltung", is the major theme,⁴⁸ writes elsewhere: "Sucht man nach der Einheit, die hinter den vielfältigen Wandlungen Kaisers steht, so wird man sie nicht in der Sprachbehandlung und auch nicht in der Technik, sondern allein in seinem Lebensgefühl des Subjektivismus und Illusionismus finden."⁴⁹ William Owen Goulden concludes without reservation: "Das zentrale Erlebnis Georg Kaisers ist die Flucht vor der Wirklichkeit gewesen."⁵⁰ Wolfgang Paulsen also pinpoints flight as central to Kaiser's work,⁵¹ as does Adolf Schütz.⁵² Studies which over-emphasise this element in Kaiser's

work often take a selective approach to the plays. Paulsen's book has no significant gaps of this sort, but, as explained above, it pays little attention to the time at which - and therefore the historical circumstances under which - each work was written. Goulden's dissertation, on the other hand, investigates only sixteen of Kaiser's plays, and ignores the exile works written while Kaiser was in Switzerland.⁵³ Much Kaiser reception, like that of Toller, regards the Expressionist works as the real Kaiser, and ignores, or treats superficially, the later plays. We shall see that the 'flight' interpretations are certainly valid, but only convey half the picture: Kaiser repeatedly attempted to confront reality and at times even criticised himself through his dramatic writing.⁵⁴

A major bone of contention in Kaiser reception is the question of whether he was really socially concerned at all. This controversy is of course linked to the idea that Kaiser persistently flees, rather than confronts, reality. It is true that Kaiser never presents contemporary social reality as objectively as Toller does generally; it is equally true that he never attained the sort of political commitment which Toller reached after the First World War. Nevertheless, doubts about his social concerns can only be upheld if his oeuvre is regarded selectively. Some critics contradict one another with regard to Kaiser's social engagement: Klaus Petersen sees Kaiser becoming more involved with political reality in the late Twenties,⁵⁵ but Ernst Schürer writes of the plays written during this period:

Dagegen werden industrielle und soziale Probleme, wie er sie in der Gas-Trilogie darstellte, nur am Rande und ironisch und satirisch behandelt. Kaiser kommt dadurch dem Publikumsgeschmack nach Entspannung

und Ruhe entgegen und erzielt beachtliche Erfolge mit seinen Stücken.⁵⁶

There exist not only primarily social interpretations of Kaiser's work - such as that of Richard Helt for example⁵⁷ -, which provide a balance to the notion that Kaiser never really confronts reality; other critics, notably Walter Huder and Wolfgang Paulsen, contradict themselves with regard to Kaiser's social involvement. A few juxtaposed relevant quotations will help to illustrate this point.

Walter Huder:

Die Lektüre blieb durch die gesamte Produktion derart wirksam, daß man überall dort, wo man in Georg Kaisers Werk Karl Marx erwartet, schließlich Schopenhauer vorfindet.⁵⁸

Man hat Georg Kaiser nachgesagt, man vermute bei ihm Marx und finde Schopenhauer vor. Mit dieser Skizze [Ein Arbeitsloser] zeigt sich Georg Kaiser, die fundamentale Bedeutung der Produktionsmittel betonend, als konsequent denkender wie radikal praktizierender, allerdings - wenn es das gäbe - individualistischer Marxist.⁵⁹

Für Georg Kaiser war die 'Erneuerung des Menschen' nur eine ästhetische, formale, ja hygienische Sache, keine gesellschaftliche Angelegenheit, weshalb im Verhältnis dazu die sozialen, politischen oder existentiellen Aspekte kaum mehr als eine Schattierung seiner These darstellen.⁶⁰

Sie [die Erzählungen] tendieren in ihrer politischen Konzeption konsequenter zum Marxismus als alle anderen Werke Georg Kaisers, sowohl der zwanziger Jahre als auch der Emigrationszeit.⁶¹

Wolfgang Paulsen:

Kaiser war nun einmal kein sozial-kritischer Dramatiker, oder doch nur so im Nebenhinein, wenn der Stoff zu zünden versprach.⁶²

Er mußte versuchen, wenn seine Bemühungen irgendeinen Sinn haben sollten, die menschliche Situation seines Vorbildes in die bewußtere und zielstrebigere Denkform eines Proletariers im 20. Jahrhundert umzudeuten. Zwischen Woyzeck und Tanaka liegt schließlich die Entfaltung des Sozialismus, dessen grundsätzliche Lebensanschauung Kaiser längst zu der seinen gemacht hatte.⁶³

Die Frage liegt tatsächlich nahe, ob er so etwas überhaupt jemals auch nur ernsthaft in Betracht gezogen hat: Kommunismus, Sozialismus, Rousseauismus, Diktatur des Kapitals oder des Proletariats, Bankwirtschaft, Polizei, Gefängniswesen: an welche Erscheinungsform man sich auch halten möchte, nirgendwo findet sich mehr als eine skurrile Verzeichnung der Gegebenheiten, die gerade noch so viel Wahrscheinlichkeit haben, daß sie erkennbar bleiben.⁶⁴

Aims of this Study.

This study will aim among other things, to show the extent and limitations of Kaiser's social concern and commitment, about which there evidently exists considerable confusion. Here a comparison with Ernst Toller can be of great help, for he was a socially concerned political writer who has nevertheless had difficulty being accepted as such, because of his distance from socialist dogma. There are elements in Toller's work which approach Marxism,⁶⁵ but he could never accept the concept of historical determinism, nor could he ever endorse the 'banal optimism' (GW I, p. 140) of scientific socialists. His was a "dritter Weg"⁶⁶ which critics have had difficulty sympathising with or even identifying. While Kaiser's social commitment doubtless wavered more than that of Toller, we can perceive a parallel trend in Kaiser reception: quotations no. 58 and 64 in particular identify a lack of dogma in Kaiser's work: this need not mean however, that this oeuvre is devoid of social implications. It

is significant that Marxist criticism of Kaiser bears remarkable resemblance to that of Toller: both are seen as socially aware allies, who nonetheless never quite managed to leap that final hurdle that would have taken them away from the subjective idealism of the bourgeois writer.⁶⁷ It is equally significant that Walter Huder believes a clearer commitment to socialism would have given Kaiser a new purpose, but that this idea is expressed with reference to Marx: "Karl Marx hätte eine Rettung bedeuten können."⁶⁸ The extent of Kaiser's social engagement is not ascertained simply by saying that Kaiser was not a Marxist.

This study aims to compare Toller's and Kaiser's relationship with reality through their art: it concentrates on how these writers feel art and the artist should react to this reality, how this reality could be changed by revolutionary means, and on the attitudes toward the masses who are to bring about such change. The sincerity and consistency with which both dramatists approach these problems will form an important part of the discussion. A thorough investigation into the life and works of Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser will enable us to compare the ideological development of two writers who lived through the same era.⁶⁹

The analysis will be thematic within a chronological framework: it is divided broadly into two sections, the first dealing with work produced before 1933, the second with the impact of Hitler's Machtergreifung on the lives and works of Toller and Kaiser. In order to trace the development of both writers accurately, this study will pay close attention to the chronology of Toller's and Kaiser's works within each thematic division. Chapter I will concentrate on the perception of contemporary capitalist society in the works of

Toller and Kaiser. Chapter II will analyse the revolutionary 'solutions' to the problems identified in Chapter I. These 'solutions' are in fact far from satisfactory and throw up a multitude of new problems. Chapter III concentrates on the non-fictional writings, and is intended both to parallel and complement the analysis of the fictional work in the previous two chapters. Chapter IV investigates Toller's and Kaiser's perception of the roles of art and the artist in the face of National Socialism, and how they felt Hitler's Germany should be tackled. Chapter V analyses both writers' ideological development during the exile years. Chapter VI, finally, seeks to identify the findings of the study as a whole.

Notes.

1. Kaiser, Georg: Werke IV (6 Vols., Huder, Walter, ed., Propyläen, Frankfurt a.M., Berlin & Vienna 1971-72), p. 542. (Subsequent page numbers refer to this edition, cited hereafter as Werke).
2. Sokel, Walter: "Ernst Toller". In: Hermand, Jost (ed.): Interpretationen zu Ernst Toller. Drama und Engagement. (LGW-Interpretationen 55. T. Buck, M. Durzak, D. Steinbach, gen. eds.), Klett, Stuttgart 1981, p. 25. (This edition cited hereafter as LGW-Interpretationen 55).
3. Toller, Ernst: Gesammelte Werke II (5 Vols., Spalek, John M. & Frühwald, Wolfgang, eds.), Hanser, Munich 1978, p. 361. (Subsequent page numbers refer to this edition, cited hereafter as GW).
4. Willibrand, W.A.: Ernst Toller: Product of Two Revolutions. Cooperative, Norman 1941, p. 18.
5. Willibrand, William Anthony: Ernst Toller and His Ideology. (University of Iowa Humanistic Studies VII), University of Iowa, Iowa 1945, p. 84.
6. Ibid., p. 119.
7. Bab, Julius: "Politisches Drama". In: Befreiungsschlacht. Kulturpolitische Betrachtungen aus literarischen Anlässen. J. Engelhorn, Stuttgart 1928, p. 106.
8. Ibid., p. 110.
9. Andersen, Francis P.: An Analytical Study of Techniques of Persuasion in the Plays of Ernst Toller. Unpubl. diss., University of Southern California 1956, p. 186. Clair Hayden Bell had come up with similar ideas when contrasting Die Maschinenstürmer with Hauptmann's Die Weber: she comes to the conclusion that Die Weber is a superior work, because it is "unburdened by preachment or teachment." (Hayden Bell, Clair: "Toller's Die Maschinenstürmer". In: Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht, Vol. XXX, No. 2, February 1938, p. 65).
10. Hagen, Rainer: Das politische Theater in Deutschland zwischen 1918 und 1933. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des deutschen Theaters und des deutschen Schauspiels. Unpubl. diss., Munich 1958, p. 37.
11. Ibid., p. 41.

12. Ibid. To say that Toller "co-wrote" Hoppla, wir leben! with Erwin Piscator is misleading: Piscator opened his own theatre with the play, and clashed with Toller over its ending. Toller later regretted having bowed to pressure from Piscator to make alterations. ("Arbeiten", GW I, p. 146). In the changed version Karl Thomas commits suicide. In addition, we know from Piscator's own account of the production that the version premiered at his theatre ended with the rather catchpenny line, spoken by Mutter Meller: "Es gibt nur eines - sich aufhängen oder die Welt verändern." (Piscator: Das politische Theater. Rowohlt, Reinbek 1963, p. 154. The book was first published in 1929). Criticism in both the left-wing and the bourgeois press was favourable as far as Piscator's technically innovative direction was concerned, less so toward the play. This is ironic, for the changes Toller agreed to make were meant to 'correct' the play politically. Furthermore, as Toller points out in "Arbeiten" (GW I, pp. 146-147), suggested alterations which Piscator himself wrote are actually characterised by pathetic language. Toller quotes directly from Piscator's manuscript to illustrate this; Rosemarie Altenhofer convincingly supports him in this matter by a direct comparison of Toller's and Piscator's respective versions of Thomas' final soliloquy. (Altenhofer, Rosemarie: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor 1980. (Diss., Washington University 1976), pp. 176-178).

13. Malzacher, Werner W.: Ernst Toller - ein Beitrag zur Dramaturgie der zwanziger Jahre. Unpubl. diss., University of Vienna 1959, pp. 114-115.

14. Ibid., p. 86.

15. This idea is also echoed in Bab's article, "Politisches Drama": "Der demokratische Apparat der Wahl wird verhöhnt und mit außerordentlich billigen Mitteln lächerlich gemacht. Daß ein altes Mütterchen keine Ahnung hat und alle drei Kandidaten zugleich wählen will, erregt ja ganz bestimmt die Heiterkeit der Theaterbesucher, aber es ist eigentlich kein sehr tiefgründiges Argument gegen die Demokratie!" (Bab: "Politisches Theater", p. 108).

16. Willibrand: Ernst Toller: Product of Two Revolutions, p. 12.

17. Reso, Martin: "Die Novemberrevolution und Ernst Toller". In: Weimarer Beiträge, Vol. V, No. 3, 1959, p. 408.

18. Reso, Martin: Der gesellschaftlich-ethische Protest im dichterischen Werk Ernst Tollers. Unpubl. diss., Friedrich-Schiller-Universität, Jena 1957, p. 89.

19. Marnette, Hans: Untersuchungen zum Inhalt-Form-Problem in Ernst Tollers Dramen. Unpubl. diss., Pädagogische Hochschule Potsdam 1963, p. 21.

20. Stephen Lamb believes Toller is gradually being regarded more favourably in the GDR, and bases this conclusion largely on the recent production (1983/84) at the Deutsches Theater of Hoppla, wir leben!. Lamb points out that the view of Toller in the reception of this production is far less harsh than in Reso's article. (Lamb, Stephen: "Hero or Villain? Notes on the Reception of Ernst Toller in the GDR." In: German Quarterly, Vol. LIX, 1986, pp. 375-386).

21. Klein, Alfred: "Zwei Dramatiker in der Entscheidung: Ernst Toller, Friedrich Wolf und die Novemberrevolution". In: LGW-Interpretationen 55, p. 60.

22. Spalek, John M.: "Ernst Toller: The Need for a New Estimate". In: German Quarterly, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4, 1966, pp. 581-598.

23. Both Jost Hermand and Richard Dove point out that Toller was interpreted by some of his earlier critics in the light of their own ideological positions, rather than his. (Hermand, Jost: "Hoppla, wir leben!". In: Unbequeme Literatur. Eine Beispielsreihe. Lothar Stiehm, Heidelberg 1971, p. 130; Dove, Richard: Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller. Peter Lang, New York, Berne & Frankfurt a.M. 1986, p. 3).

24. Klein, Dorothea: Der Wandel der dramatischen Darstellungsform im Werk Ernst Tollers (1919-1930). Unpubl. diss., Ruhr-Universität Bochum 1968, p. 6.

25. The fact that these years are so often neglected inspired Martha Gustavson Marks' dissertation: Ernst Toller: His Fight against Fascism. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor 1982. (Diss., University of Wisconsin, Madison 1980).

26. Altenhofer, Rosemarie: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 323.

27. Altenhofer points out herself that Toller's articles etc. have been neglected and regarded as "politische Gelegenheitsarbeiten" because he has traditionally not been evaluated as a political writer: "Ein Schriftsteller, der seine eigentliche Aufgabe in der politischen Aufklärung sieht, u.a. durch das Medium der Kunst, der

mit der Feder und mit der Sprache kämpft, aber jederzeit bereit ist, vom Schreibtisch aufzustehen und sein Leben für diesen Kampf einzusetzen, ein politischer Schriftsteller also, wird mit den Maßstäben einer traditionellen Gattungspoetik und Dichtungstheorie gemessen." (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, pp. 149-150). Altenhofer certainly evaluates Toller as a political writer, but rarely uses his political journalism to substantiate her claims.

28. Diebold, Bernhard: Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser. Frankfurter Verlags-Anstalt, Frankfurt a.M. 1924, p. 33.

29. Landauer was in turn a great admirer of Georg Kaiser, and recognised the influence his anarchistic ideas had on Gas; in 1918 he wrote to Auguste Hauschner: "Und nun sollten Sie Georg Kaisers Drama Gas lesen, das auch von der Siedlung handelt und wohl auch irgendwie von mir herkommt." (Buber, Martin (ed.): Gustav Landauer. Sein Lebensgang in Briefen. Rütten und Loening, Frankfurt a.M. 1929, p. 342).

30. Holger Pausch points out that the term "geistige Probleme" is rather meaningless, as it could be applied to any writer's work, but concedes: "Dennoch wäre die Literaturwissenschaft besser beraten gewesen, hätte sie sich mehr um die Spezifizierung dieser 'geistigen Probleme' gekümmert, als um Diebolds fatale Wortprägung." (Pausch, Holger A.: "Die Literatur über Georg Kaiser: Ein Forschungsbericht". In: Pausch, Holger A. & Reinhold, Ernest (eds.): Georg Kaiser. Eine Aufsatzsammlung nach einem Symposium in Edmonton/Kanada. (Schriftenreihe Agora 31), Agora, Berlin & Darmstadt 1980, p. 282. This edition cited hereafter as Symposium).

31. Landauer, Gustav: "Fragment über Georg Kaiser". In: Der werdende Mensch. Aufsätze über Leben und Schrifttum. (Buber, Martin, ed.) Kiepenheuer, Potsdam 1921, pp. 353-354.

32. In the first years following the war, Kaiser's work was occasionally performed in West Germany; reviews of these productions, while obviously not scholarly pieces, show how the 'Denkspieler' label had asserted itself. One such article - entitled "Kalter Denker" - describes Die Bürger von Calais as "Ein Schachspiel der Logik. [...] Es fallen schöne Worte, kluge Sätze, Gedankenstenographie - aber eben nur Worte." (Ba.: "Kalter Denker". In: Der Abend, Vol. IX, No. 218, 20 September 1954. Photocopy held in Georg Kaiser Archiv, Berlin - hereafter cited as GKA). Another reviewer actually addresses the 'Denkspieler' label. In so doing, he confuses Kaiser's original use of

the term 'Denk-Spiel' with Diebold's invention: "Das Wort vom 'Denkspieler Georg Kaiser' stammt von Georg Kaiser selber. Es ist keine Erfindung der Theaterkritik und Literaturgeschichte. Er wollte so gesehen und bewertet werden, vom expressionistischen Auftakt und Mittelstück bis zum expressionistischen Ausklang." (bz.: "Das Opfer der Agnete. Georg-Kaiser-Uraufführung im Nationaltheater Mannheim". In: Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung, No. 271, 19 December 1949, p. 2. Photocopy held in GKA).

33. Kasack, Hermann: Mosaiksteine. Beiträge zu Literatur und Kunst. Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a.M. 1956, p. 242.

34. Linick, Leroy Marion: Der Subjektivismus im Werke Georg Kaisers. (Sammlung Heitz. Akademische Abhandlungen zur Kulturgeschichte II,4), Heitz & Co., Strasbourg 1938, p. 2.

35. Kauf, Robert: Faith and Despair in Georg Kaiser's Work. Unpubl. diss., University of Chicago 1955, p. 11.

36. Kesten, Hermann: Meine Freunde die Poeten. Donau, Vienna & Munich 1953, p. 98.

37. Sokel: "Ernst Toller". In: LGW-Interpretationen 55, p. 33. Julius Bab sees the mark of the true artist in the uninvolved craftsman, which is why he views Toller as a poor writer: "Immer wieder erlebt man es, daß der Dilettant bei Berührung mit einem wahren Künstler furchtbar enttäuscht und entsetzt ist über seine 'Herzenskälte'. Was er für Kälte hält, ist aber das Wesen einer tieferen Lebensart, in der der Glutkern der Phantasie von dem Eishauch der Erkenntnis bestrichen wird und dadurch erst die Erstarrungen der Oberfläche, die ausdrucks mächtigen Formen entstehen." (Bab: "Politisches Drama", p. 107). Toller himself takes a completely different view: he sees the prerequisite for great art in the artist's moral attitude, rather than in his formal ability. In a tribute to Anton Hansen he writes: "Es ist nicht die große Leistung allein, die den großen Künstler erweist. Gewiß ist großes formales Können Voraussetzung aller großen Kunst, aber doch nur Voraussetzung. Das Letzte, das jenseits von Können steht, entscheidet Kunst, und dieses Letzte heißt: Sein. Ein kleiner Mensch kann ein großer Könnner sein, nie ein großer Künstler. Der große Künstler war immer ein großer Mensch, Anton Hansen ist es." (Toller: "Die Angst der Kreatur". In: Berliner Tageblatt, Vol. LVI, No. 167, Abend-Ausg., p. 3).

38. Examples of such critical approaches are: Durzak, Manfred: "Der 'Zwang zur Politik': Georg Kaiser und Stephan Hermlin im Exil". In: Monatshefte, Vol. LXVIII, No. 4, 1976, pp. 373-386, and Kieser, Rolf: Erzwungene Symbiose. Thomas Mann, Robert Musil, Georg Kaiser und Bertolt Brecht im Schweizer Exil. Paul Haupt, Berne & Stuttgart 1984.

39. Diebold: Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser, p. 9.

40. Kenworthy, B.J.: Georg Kaiser. Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1957, p. xiv.

41. Schwertfeger, Ruth: "'Idee' und 'Vision': Zu Georg Kaisers Dramatik der Jahre 1918-1927". In: Arnold, Armin, ed.: Interpretationen zu Georg Kaiser. (LGW-Interpretationen 49. T. Buck, M. Durzak, D. Steinbach, gen. eds.), Klett, Stuttgart 1980, pp. 70-83. (This edition cited hereafter as LGW-Interpretationen 49).

42. Schürer, Ernst: Georg Kaiser und Bertolt Brecht. Über Leben und Werk. Athenäum, Frankfurt a.M. 1971, p. 96.

43. Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser, p. 199.

44. Linick: Der Subjektivismus im Werke Georg Kaisers, p. 1.

45. Sokel, Walter H.: Der literarische Expressionismus. Der Expressionismus in der deutschen Literatur des zwanzigsten Jahrhunderts. Albert Langen & Georg Müller, Munich (no year), p. 177.

46. Kuxdorf believes the entire body of Kaiser's work reflects Walter Rathenau's concept of man's triple-staged development from primitive, instinctive creature to a higher being. (Kuxdorf, Manfred: Die Suche nach dem Menschen im Drama Georg Kaisers. Kanadische Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur. Herbert Lang, Berne & Frankfurt a.M. 1971, p. 16).

47. Fivian, Eric A.: Georg Kaiser und seine Stellung im Expressionismus. Kurt Desch, Munich 1947, pp. 279-280.

48. Fix, Wolfgang: Die Ironie im Drama Georg Kaisers. Unpubl. diss., Heidelberg 1951, p. 190.

49. Fix, Wolfgang: "'Es ist nichts so, wie es ist.' Das dramatische Werk Georg Kaisers". In: Deutsche Rundschau, Vol. LXXVI, No. 6, 1950, p. 478.

50. Goulden, William Owen: Die Problematik der Wirklichkeit in den Dramen von Georg Kaiser. Unpubl. diss., University of Cologne 1953, p. 165.

51. Paulsen, Wolfgang: Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes. Max Niemeyer, Tübingen 1960, p. 60.

52. Schütz, Adolf: Georg Kaisers Nachlaß. Eine Untersuchung über die Entwicklungslinien im Lebenswerk des Dichters. Frobenius, Basel 1951, p. 107.

53. Goulden looks at the following plays: Von morgens bis mitternachts, Kanzlist Krehler, Die Koralle, Gas, Gas II, Gats, Mississippi, Hölle Weg Erde, Noli me tangere, Nebeneinander, Zweimal Oliver, Brand im Opernhaus, Gilles und Jeanne, Oktoberfest, Alain und Elise and Rosamunde Floris. Only the latter two were written after 1933.

54. These elements of self-criticism in Kaiser's work (evident in the plays Noli me tangere and Klawitter) are overlooked by Diebold when he writes: "Georg Kaiser spricht nie als Georg Kaiser; steht außerhalb seiner Maschinendramen. Er schafft sich Marionetten von vollendeter Denkreinheit; er preßt den letzten Blutstropfen persönlichen Erlebens aus den Figuren seiner Phantasie; stellt sie außer sich; wirft sie in den Apparat des Schicksals und läßt ihn spielen. Sein Menschentum scheidet sich vom fertigen Werk. Vom Werke Kaisers erfahren wir nie den Menschen." (Diebold: Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser, p. 27).

55. Petersen, Klaus: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur. (Kanadische Studien zur deutschen Sprache und Literatur, No. 15), Herbert Lang, Berne, Frankfurt a.M. & Munich 1976, p. 59.

56. Schürer, Ernst: "Georg Kaiser und die neue Sachlichkeit (1922-1932). Themen, Tendenzen und Formen". In: Symposium, p. 136.

57. Helt, Richard C.: Untersuchungen zum Pessimismus in den sozialen Dramen Georg Kaisers. Unpubl. diss., Washington University 1972. Robert Kauf's dissertation (Faith and Despair in Georg Kaiser's Work) also acknowledges Kaiser's social concern, but attempts to do justice to the "metaphysical" (p. 16) concern in Kaiser's plays as well. Kauf's study is competent and wide-ranging - it includes an analysis of a small and generally ignored work, Der Zar läßt sich photographieren, and a chapter on Kaiser's poetry, for example - but the discussions of individual plays occasionally lack depth.

Elsewhere, Kauf rejects the notion that Kaiser's ideas were the "fantasies of an extreme subjectivist", and concludes that they "accurately mirrored the age". (Kauf, Robert: "Georg Kaiser's Social Tetralogy and the Social Ideas of Walter Rathenau". In: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America, Vol. LXXVII, 1962, p. 311).

58. Huder, Walter: "Nachwort". In: Kaiser: Stücke, Erzählungen, Aufsätze, Gedichte. (Huder, (ed.), Kiepenheuer und Witsch, Cologne & Berlin 1966, p. 773. This edition cited hereafter as SEAG). Huder is adopting a phrase Diebold used to describe Die Koralle here: "Man erwartete Opfertat und es gab nur Philosophie. Man erhoffte Karl Marx, aber es wurde Schopenhauer." (Diebold: Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser, p. 65). In quotation no. 59, Huder distances himself from this idea again.

59. Huder, Walter: "Die politischen und sozialen Themen der Exil-Dramatik Georg Kaisers". In: Sinn und Form, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1961, p. 602.

60. Huder, Walter: "Nachwort". In: Werke III, pp. 873-874.

61. Huder: "Nachwort". In: SEAG, p. 788.

62. Paulsen, Wolfgang: [Review of Rudolf Bussmann's study, Einzelner und Masse - Zum dramatischen Werk Georg Kaisers]. In: Germanistik, Vol. XX, No. 2, 1979, p. 557. In order to prove his point, Paulsen remarks in this review that it is understandable that Bussmann concentrates on the Gas trilogy; the real weakness of Bussmann's study, however, is that the rest of Kaiser's work is treated so superficially.

63. Paulsen, Wolfgang: Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes, pp. 74-75. Paulsen also contradicts himself with regard to the role of form in Kaiser's work. He concludes in Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes (pp. 43-44): "Er hatte ungewöhnlich lange nach der ihm gemäßen dramatischen Form und Sprache zu suchen, denn Form und Sprache waren für ihn nichts Primäres, wie man wohl gemeint hat, sondern sie ergaben sich ihm erst, nachdem er den Schlüssel für das zentrale Geschehen seines dramatischen Wollens gefunden hatte." Elsewhere, however, Paulsen comments: "Von hier aus wird deutlich, daß man Kaisers dramatischer Leistung nur dann gerecht wird, wenn man versteht, daß es bei ihm in erster Linie immer wieder um Form und um Formen ging, um ein ästhetisches Erlebnis also, nicht aber um irgendwelche Inhalte; diese waren für ihn letzten Endes nicht mehr als das sine qua non der Form." (Paulsen: "Kaiser". In: Kunisch, Hermann (ed.): Handbuch der

deutschen Gegenwartsliteratur. Nymphenburger Verlagshandlung, Munich 1965, p. 332).

64. Paulsen: Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes, p. 12.

65. Toller's analyses of society's problems are often close to those of the Marxist, in that he views economic factors as all-important: "Die bürgerliche Gesellschaft basiert darauf, daß die großen Massen ihre Arbeitskraft verkaufen, eine kleine Schicht vom Ertrag dieser Arbeitskraft lebt und immer reicher wird." (Toller & Mühr, Alfred: Nationalsozialismus. Eine Diskussion über den Kulturbankrott des Bürgertums. Kiepenheuer, Berlin 1930, p. 27). A further example of Toller stressing the importance of economic factors can be found in the piece "Weltrevolution" (1919). In: Quer Durch. Reisebilder und Reden, Kiepenheuer, Berlin 1930, pp. 216-220.

66. Hermand, Jost: Unbequeme Literatur, p. 149: "Daß er [...] trotzdem [ein Mann zwischen den Stühlen] gewesen ist, spricht nicht gegen ihn, sondern gegen die Unwilligkeit der anderen, sich mit der Möglichkeit eines 'dritten Weges' auseinanderzusetzen."

67. Karl-Heinz Schmidt's view of the left-wing bourgeois writer is typical of Marxist criticism's assessment of both Toller and Kaiser: "Stellt man aber die Frage, wieweit es diesen oppositionellen und humanistischen bürgerlichen Schriftstellern gelang, die hinter den antagonistischen menschlichen Konflikten liegenden sozialen und politischen Kausalkomplexe aufzuspüren und in die künstlerische Gestaltung einfließen zu lassen, dann muß gesagt werden: So beachtenswert die Konflikteinlage in den einzelnen Stücken ist, so wenig vermochten es die Dramatiker auf Grund ihrer bürgerlich-idealistischen Weltanschauung, auf Grund ihrer sozialpolitischen Klassenstellung zum tieferen gesellschaftlich bedingten Wesen dieser menschlichen Konflikte vorzudringen." (Schmidt, Karl-Heinz: "Zur Gestaltung antagonistischer Konflikte bei Brecht und Kaiser. Eine vergleichende Studie". In: Weimarer Beiträge, Vol. XI, No. 4, 1965, p. 551). Wilfried Adling even draws a rather contrived comparison between the Cashier of Von morgens bis mitternachts and Toller: "Gleicht nicht schon das Schicksal des Kassierers in manchem dem Weg dieser Künstler durch Krieg und Revolution? Mögen sie nun Ernst Toller oder Carl Zuckmayer heißen: sie halten zunächst den Marsch in den ersten Weltkrieg für den entscheidenden Schritt zu jenem 'Anderswerden', das ihrer Unzufriedenheit mit dem spätbürgerlichen Dasein ein Ende bereiten soll. Hofft der Kassierer auf die Ekstase eines turbulenten Sechstagerennens, so versuchen

sie es mit dem Rausch der 'Vaterlands-Verteidigung' und 'Front-Kameradschaft' in einer noch chaotischeren imperialistischen 'Materialschlacht'. - Als sich erweist, daß sie damit auf die falsche Karte gesetzt haben, setzen sie dann, gegen Ende des Krieges, auf die richtige? Wie der Kassierer suchen sie ihr Heil in einer verschwommenen Erneuerung der 'Seele'." (Adling, Wilfried: "Georg Kaisers Drama Von morgens bis mitternachts und die Zersetzung des dramatischen Stils". In: Weimarer Beiträge, Vol. V, No. 3, 1959, p. 382).

68. Huder: "Nachwort". In: Werke III, p. 874.

69. Thus far an in-depth comparison of Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser has not been attempted. Renate Benson's book, German Expressionist Drama. Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser (1984) makes a few comparative comments, but essentially looks at both writers separately as the leading exponents of Expressionist drama. M. Helena Gonçalves da Silva includes both Toller and Kaiser in her study Character, Ideology and Symbolism in the Plays of Wedekind, Sternheim, Kaiser, Toller, and Brecht (1985), but as might be expected from such a broad study, the range of material is limited. Toller's work after Hinkemann is not considered, and in the Kaiser section only Von morgens bis mitternachts and the Gas plays are discussed in detail: the tradition of concentrating on the Expressionist work is thus continued in this study.

SECTION ONE

WILHELMINE EMPIRE, WAR AND WEIMAR REPUBLIC

Chapter I

CAPITALISM AND ITS PROBLEMS

Capitalism: A Repressive and Deep-Rooted System.

In Toller's first play, Die Wandlung (1917-18), capitalism is attacked chiefly for its war-mongering, as this debut is greatly influenced by Toller's own war experience. Yet this does not mean that the capitalist society which causes war is any less repressive in peacetime: not only soldiers, but men, women and children are shown to be victims of an unjust, manipulative system. (GW II, pp. 58-59). In Die Wandlung however, more than in any other play by Toller, the very perpetrators of this system are also seen as victims who lead an unfulfilled life. In an impassioned appeal to the masses, Friedrich also addresses the rich: "[Ich weiß] Um dich, du Reicher, der du Geld anhäufst, und alle verachtest, die andern und dich selbst." (GW II, p. 59). A little later Friedrich instructs: "Geht hin zu den Reichen und zeigt ihnen ihr Herz, das ein Schutthaufen ward. Doch seid gütig zu ihnen, denn auch sie sind Arme, Verirrte." (GW II, p. 61). In Kaiser's Die Koralle (1917) the Billionaire similarly reflects Friedrich's idea of the rich and powerful as deluded victims of a false system of values. Die Wandlung is infused with a belief in selfless reason which is never present to the same extent in Toller's work again: these conciliatory ideas give way to a more ruthless picture of the capitalist order in subsequent plays. In Masse Mensch (1919), a work in which capitalism is again linked to war, the revolutionary Woman, in accusing a system equally repressive during peacetime,

asks her Husband: "Wer fand die Folter eurer goldnen Mühlen, / Die mahlen, mahlen Tag um Tag Profit?" (GW II, p. 105). As Friedrich had before her, the Woman makes an humanitarian appeal to cynical speculators in the Second - dream- Scene. While Friedrich's attempt to bring mankind to its senses finds willing listeners, the Bankers in Masse Mensch virtually ignore the Woman's brief intrusion. It inspires them merely to charitable action, a further cynical ruling class measure, designed to conceal the exploitative nature of their activities; the Woman herself recognises the bourgeois state's ventures in charity as diversionary, describing them as: "Beschwichtigung aus Eitelkeit und Schwäche." (GW II, p. 71).

The establishment apologists in these first two plays - the Old Gentleman, the University Professor and the Clergyman in Die Wandlung, the Woman's Husband in Masse Mensch - defend a profiteering system by resorting to appeals about the 'fatherland' and 'traditional values'. A new excuse emerges in Die Maschinenstürmer (1921): the principle of social Darwinism. As so often in Kaiser's work - in Gas (1918) or Mississippi (1929), for example - the rulers are well aware of the exploitative suffering they cause to others. They seek to justify it by claiming that there can be no strength without weakness, no winners without losers. Capitalism is the expression of a natural law:

Der Sieger pflanzt sich fort, nicht der
Geschwächte!
Dem rücksichtslosen Kampf der Interessen
Entwächst die Harmonie der Welt.
Wer oben bleibt, bleibt oben nach Naturgesetzen,
Die unserm Menschensinn für immer unergründlich
Bleiben. Nur so entwickelt sich Kultur.
(GW II, p. 162).

The result of this 'law' is oppression, as it is of the Billionaire's (Die Koralle) 'anti-Darwinist' theory

figures of authority "packen das Volk an seinen Instinkten!" (GW II, p. 206). The state and its laws fully support his gory business.¹ People are no more than commodities: the Showman's advertisement seeks "erstklassiges Menschenmaterial" (GW II, p. 205), which in turn echoes Jimmy Cobbett's "Was sind wir? Ware! Ding!" (GW II, p. 162). In both Hinkemann and Die Maschinenstürmer, the worker's value is determined by the profits he is capable of generating, but in the former play there is not even a hint of a deluded ruling class. The same applies to the more complex realistic plays, Hoppla, wir leben! (1927) and Feuer aus den Kesseln (1930), and to the radio play 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' (1930).

Repressive capitalism appears first in Kaiser's work in Die Koralie, the first of the famous Gas plays, at about the same time that Toller was writing Die Wandlung. The central figure of this play is the Billionaire, a rags-to-riches capitalist, whose own account of his life is an ingenious but curious reversal of the social Darwinism encountered in Die Maschinenstürmer. His climb from poverty to wealth owes nothing to strength and everything to weakness and cowardice, he insists. The Billionaire's father had been a labourer at the plant now belonging to him, he had earned a pittance, and, when fired, he had left his wife and child. In despair, the Billionaire's mother had taken her own life. "In dieser Minute pflanzte sich mir das Entsetzen ein," (Werke I, p. 663) says the Billionaire; his meteoric rise is a perpetual flight from "das Furchtbare". (p. 663). The Man in Grey, the most overtly socialist character in all of Kaiser's dramatic work, points out that the 'coward's' experiences were not uncommon, but the Billionaire attributes the effect they had on him to his extraordinary weakness. The ability to put up with virtually intolerable living

conditions, in other words, is an heroic act, and repression has nothing to do with deliberate or conspiratorial cynicism.

While this unconventional portrayal² of the road to wealth completely disarms the Man in Grey, the effects of the Billionaire's power are conventional enough, for the harsh reality is that the latter exploits his workers because the success of his 'flight' depends on social division. He surrounds himself with various establishment figures on his yacht, who combine social complacency with a snobbish love of art;³ they are ignorant, despite their education, of the suffering below deck in the intolerable heat of the engine room. The regenerated Billionaire's Son points out just how minimal the distance between oppressor and oppressed really is. The Billionaire has also gained considerable political influence: he is able to protect his entrepreneurial interests with the military (Werke I, p. 680) and, as his Daughter reports, has seen to the suppression of press coverage of an explosion in one of his mines. (p. 682).

Capitalism, with all its repressive measures, is no more than an instrument to the Billionaire, no more than a means to distance himself from the social conditions which he fears. The irony, of course, is that he helps to create and perpetuate these conditions. Money in itself, however, does not bring lasting peace of mind to the Billionaire - just as it does not gain the Cashier of Von morgens bis mitternachts (1912) anything - and he quite readily rejects it. So while a 'counter-regenerated' Man in Grey acknowledges the view of a mercilessly competitive society - "Jeder gegen jeden schonungslos!" (Werke I, p. 705) - he

also points out the difference between the Billionaire and the conventional capitalists: "[...] Die meisten würden auch die Kosten scheuen!" (p. 705). The Man in Grey thus points to the greatest irony of all: the Billionaire, in order to reject wealth so successfully, could not have done so without possessing it in the first place.

The portrayal of capitalism in Gats (1925) is also somewhat indirect and concealed. Not only is the term 'capitalism' never used, but Kaiser does not attempt a strictly realistic confrontation with contemporary society in this play, for the chief social ill is described as acute overpopulation. Like Gas II, it is an abstract comment on contemporary social problems. However, though overpopulation is blamed, in particular by the Captain, the crisis which has prompted the formation of the "Weltsiedlungsunion" in Gats seems to have been caused by a capitalist society. The world's nations have suffered from economic inequality; the Captain himself is "ein reicher Mann"⁴ (Werke II, p. 437), and the "Weltsiedlungsunion" is made up of "die Schwächsten aus aller Welt." (p. 440). While most critics concentrate on the Captain's failure to recognise the instinctive desire of women to reproduce,⁵ a theme borne out in the Third Act, Manfred Kuxdorf correctly assesses the role of the impoverished masses in the rejection of the sterility drug:

Der Fehler des Kapitäns liegt in seiner radikalen Methode, mit der er die Auslese treffen wollte: eine neue humane Gesellschaft auf inhumane Weise durchsetzen zu wollen. Die Schwachen, so glaubte er, sollten auf Kosten der Starken verzichten.⁶

This quotation, while pointing to the moral dilemma of the revolutionary - a theme to be discussed in the next chapter - highlights the economic division

still inherent in society. While he commends the Captain's view of greatness,⁷ the Fourth Settler exposes their leader's ingrained prejudice against the poor (the Captain refers to the settlers as "Ihr Überzähligen" (Werke II, p. 440), and believes that they are therefore the logical candidates for gats):

Da ist es heraus. Da klingelt die Totenglocke.
Wir müssen sterben, weil wir halbtot sind.
Wir dürfen nicht essen, weil wir immer hungrig
waren. Wir sollen nicht trinken, weil uns
immer dürstete. Wir müssen nicht wohnen,
weil wir nie hausten. Wir sind Dreck und
Kehricht. Der Dreck - der Dreck!!!! (Werke
II, p. 440).

During the final years of the Weimar Republic, Kaiser's attacks on capitalism became more direct. Both Mississippi and Der Silbersee (1932) are evidence of this trend. The chief figure of the former play, Noel Kehoe, is an anti-materialist, anti-capitalist fanatical Christian. His reason for stopping work is essentially secular, despite the language: "Er [Gott] hat uns auf den Äckern gesucht, als wir die Schaufel aus der Hand legten und nicht mehr ernteten für die Mächtigen, die mit dem Gut der Erde Schacher treiben." (Werke II, p. 667). Kehoe believes that most people are seduced by material wealth, but are nevertheless enslaved by the few truly powerful and rich:

Schrecklich zerstört die Verwüstung ihr
Antlitz. Es zuckt voller Gier. Wonach?
Nach dem Vorbild, das die Mächtigen der
Erde mit der Beute ihres Reichtums geben.
Es bringt euch alle von Sinnen zu sein wie
sie - und bleibt doch immer nur ihre Sklaven,
die an ihren Türmen von Palästen bauen,
bis euch der Odem schwindet. (Werke II,
p. 660).

Kehoe's former wife, Doris, represents this corruptible majority - she is a materialist, a racist,⁸ a woman

completely devoid of ideals, but who has learned, under the influence of her new businessman husband, to spot an exploitable market.⁹

The society which Kehoe and his friends are determined to destroy - or, as they would interpret it, to allow God to destroy - is described by the government representative Stimson, who elevates crass, manipulative capitalism to a virtue: "Da wird die Produktion kontrolliert - niedergehalten oder gesteigert, um die Preise zu bilden, für die man kaufen soll." (Werke II, p. 679). Stimson is as aware as Kehoe of the corruptibility of man, and assumes he can buy the farmers off: "[...] es ist der Vorzug der amerikanischen Nation in allen Fragen der Menschlichkeit den geschäftlichen Vorteil in den Vordergrund zu rücken. Damit ist sie im Begriff die Welt zu erobern..." (Werke II, p. 675). However, once Stimson realises that Kehoe is refusing to move on principle, the argument becomes more heated; he accuses the farmers of "Produktionssabotage" (Werke II, p. 684), of trying to destroy a state whose *raison d'être* is to be economically powerful. The entire machinery of this state does not hesitate to crush Kehoe and his sect.

Critics have concentrated on Kaiser's attack on Hitler in Der Silbersee - contained in the ballad "Cäsars Tod" - and on the fact that the work was the last of Kaiser's plays to be performed in Germany before the Nazis banned his work from the stage. The materialistic criticism of capitalism and social division is often only mentioned in passing. B. J. Kenworthy writes for example:

Die ganze Tendenz des Stückes ist antikapitalistisch, und der Song über Cäsars Tod hatte offensichtlich einen Bezug auf Hitlers wachsende Macht und auf die

mörderischen Konflikte im Innern der NSDAP, welche im Juni 1934 zur Ermordung von Röhm und seinen Anhängern und somit zur Beseitigung der letzten sozialistischen Reste in der Partei führten.¹⁰

Contemporary sources suggest that extreme right-wing opinion objected to the play's left-wing tendencies, rather than to any direct allusions to Hitler. A statement of protest signed by various right-wing groups - including the 'NSDAP Kreisleitung Magdeburg', the 'Kampfbund für deutsche Kultur' and 'Stahlhelm' - for example, sees Der Silbersee as an "Entwürdigung der Kunst zu einseitiger undeutscher Propaganda bolschewistischer Theorien." This statement concludes: "Mit schamloser Aufdringlichkeit predigt dieses Stück den Gedanken des Klassenhasses und birgt in sich ungezählte offene und versteckte Aufforderungen zum Klassenkampf und zur Gewalttätigkeit."¹¹ Although violence is hardly endorsed in any form in Der Silbersee - indeed, the attack on imperialist aggression in the song "Cäsars Tod" is the only instance in the play in which violence is even addressed - this Nazi protest quite rightly recognises - despite its obvious bias - the theme of social division as central to Der Silbersee. Olim and Severin, the play's protagonists, have to struggle, like Kehoe and his friends, against an unjust system dedicated to the maximisation of profit. This system, while producing enough food to supply everyone, deliberately maintains unemployment and abject poverty by destroying 'surpluses' in order to 'stabilise' prices. (Werke III, p. 202). Like Prisoner 5 in Noli me tangere (1921), Severin and his friends see crime as the only escape from their misery. The inhabitants of the rural ghetto from which Severin comes, are at the bottom of a social system in which the earning workers - the Shop Assistants, Olim (while still a member of the police force), and the Nurse - are exploited

and simultaneously used as instruments of repression against the most oppressed members of society by a cynical ruling class, represented by Frau von Luber and Baron Laur.

Internal working-class conflict dominates many of Toller's major pre-1933 plays: exceptions are Die Wandlung, Der entfesselte Wotan and Feuer aus den Kesseln. This internal conflict serves to illustrate the extent to which the ruling ideology has permeated the working-class. It is the deep-rootedness of the capitalist system which prevents working-class unity in Masse Mensch, Die Maschinenstürmer and Hoppla, wir leben!, and is evident in the shareholders' meeting in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' The most pessimistic expression of Toller's doubts about working-class solidarity in the face of capitalist repression is Hinkemann, however. Despite the fact that capitalism is portrayed as the cause of war in Hinkemann, there is a certain ambiguity about the causes of general social misery in this play - unlike in Die Maschinenstürmer, which is ideologically much more straightforward. This ambiguity - namely, that workers' suffering is induced by an exploitative system as well as by the unresolvably tragic nature of the human condition - is seen by Richard Dove as an aesthetic weakness in the play.¹² However, while it is true that Toller presents working-class suffering in Hinkemann as the consequence of social conditioning, and yet shows a hopelessly depraved human race in the second part of the Third Act's First Scene, this ambiguity helps to underline one of the play's main ideas: that the suffering which encumbers the proletarian cannot be alleviated by labour legislation and the redistribution of profit alone. In "Arbeiten" (1930), Toller further underlines his belief in the two-sided nature of suffering:

"Wir wollen keine himmlische Erlösung, wir haben erkannt, daß zweierlei Not drückt: die Not, die gegeben ist durch das menschliche Leben und die Not, die gegeben ist durch die Ungerechtigkeit des gesellschaftlichen Systems." (GW I, p. 140). The ambiguity in Hinkemann is an illustration of this dual nature of human misery. On the one hand, a repressive system is shown to keep workers materially disadvantaged, while a lust for sensationalism - what Thomas Bütow refers to as "die vitale Rohheit"¹³ - is presented as an innate flaw, as it is initially in Kaiser's Die Lederköpfe (1927-28). What is certain however, is that this violent, cruel coarseness is encouraged by the capitalist order, because abject misery is regarded as an exploitable commodity. The Showman explains this to Hinkemann: "Volk will Blut sehen!!! Blut!!! Trotz zweitausend Jahren christlicher Moral! Mein Unternehmen trägt dem Rechnung. So harmoniert Volksinteresse mit Privatinteresse." (GW II, p. 205). Hinkemann has not only been mutilated in a capitalist war, but has returned to a Germany in which lasting, productive work is scarce. Paul Großhahn has been laid off, his hopes of promotion dashed. The lack of real employment creates the market which the Showman exploits so effectively; Hinkemann, when promising Grete that he will undertake the most backbreaking labour, ironically foreshadows the humiliations he is forced into by material need: "Ich schaff Arbeit! ...Und wenn ich gleich mich ducken müßt wie ein Tier!..." (GW II, p. 198). Social factors exacerbate human misery and the lust for sensationalism present in man. The passions unleashed by these sensationalist tastes also strengthen the existing system, as they distract from, rather than solve, social problems. The Showman's confident prediction of considerable audience reaction to Hinkemann's act - "Volk rast vor Lust!" (GW II, p. 206) - parallels the effects

of the Cashier's prize money in Kaiser's Von morgens bis mitternachts. The Cashier, central character of the latter play, interprets the passion of the masses as a positive liberating phenomenon. To his dismay, this passion is controlled all too easily, because it is spontaneous and not conscious of its own power. In fact, the passions the Cashier unleashes in the sports arena are only an intensification of the escapist sensations the venue is designed to provide anyway. Therefore, these passions are, like those produced by sensationalism in Hinkemann, themselves a means of control.

Großhahn is not actually physically injured in any way, but he too is a victim of a society pervaded by the values of an unjust system: he has been made redundant and believes "Armes Volk ist schlechter dran als Vieh..." (GW II, p. 199), which is worse than the conclusion a Woman had come to in Die Wandlung.¹⁴ Cattle at least are fattened before slaughter. Großhahn is the descendent of the Kommis and the Nameless One in that he sees through the machinations of the ruling class.¹⁵ However, while not going as far as the active collaboration of Henry Cobbett, he is too complacent to support any struggle for active change. He is an escapist whose aim in life is the pursuit of sexual adventure. He believes this is so for all workers, owing to the absence of material distraction; just as society's rulers often lift their material superiority on to a moral plane, proclaiming the status quo a virtue - as do Ure in Die Maschinenstürmer or Stimson in Mississippi - so too does Großhahn justify his escapism and his lack of solidarity for his own kind by claiming the situation is governed by natural laws: "Für uns Proleten ist die Liebe ganz was anderes als für die reichen Leute."¹⁶ (GW II, p. 201). Großhahn recognises the moral double standards of the bourgeoisie,

but has no hesitation in adopting them for himself in order to seduce Grete:

Schlecht, mit dem Wort jonglieren die Pfaffen und die Kapitalisten... Schlecht wärest du gegen dich, wenn du einem Mann, der kein Mann ist, die Treue halten wolltest. Und überhaupt Treue. Auch ein Gottseibeius fürs arme Volk. Für die reichen Leute ist das längst ein Ammenmärchen. (GW II, pp. 203-204).

In Kaiser's Gas, capitalism is also portrayed as a deep-rooted system, which is not only difficult to overcome materially, but which has imbued the workers with values which they have not learned to reject. In Hinkemann, Großhahn has adopted values which are counter-productive to the growth of working-class solidarity. A confrontation between a Slater and a Tiler also exemplifies the deep-rootedness of bourgeois notions of superiority. The Slater claims:

Und wenn hundertmal Revolution war! Da kann keine Revolution was ändern! Dekorationsmaler ist etwas besseres als Tüncher, Buchdrucker etwas besseres als Tapetendrucker, Zeitungssetzer etwas besseres als Tabellen-setzer, Kupferschmied etwas besseres als Kesselschmied, herrschaftlicher Kutscher etwas besseres als gewöhnlicher Fuhrmann. Wir bleiben Schieferdecker und ihr bleibt Ziegeldecker! (GW II, p. 214).

In Gas, a revolution has also taken place, but it is rendered ineffective largely by workers' ingrained attitudes. The empire the Billionaire had built in Die Koralle is now owned by the workers, but despite the division of profits they are still enslaved by their work, perhaps even more so, as the race for ever bigger profits and the absence of industrial disputes mean they must work longer and more intensive shifts. (Werke II, p. 13). That material freedom does not automatically bring emancipation is exemplified

by the workers' insistence on rebuilding the plant, despite the inevitability of further explosions. However, it is not only these internal inadequacies of the Billionaire's Son's social experiment which cause its failure: capitalism also plays a significant role. Most critics certainly prefer to emphasise Kaiser's critique of the Billionaire's Son's redistribution of wealth. Bernhard Diebold, for example, thinks Kaiser is attacking the naivety of labour legislation as a road to paradise, as well as the inherent evil of industrialism:

Die Schichten wechseln nur, die Sklaven nennen sich nun mehr freie Diener am Werke und das Geld heißt Gas! Was ist damit erreicht? Daß der Mensch unter anderem Schlagwort dieselbe Raserei der Arbeit vollbringt. Daß der Beruf den Menschen weiter als Maschine behandelt; als sinnlos turbelnden, Räder drehenden, Seile ziehenden, Zahlen schreibenden, Paragraphen redenden Puppen-Automaten des Industrialismus - der früher einmal vom Kapital den Namen hatte, und nun als brüderliches Gemeinschaftskapital unheimlich, ungreifbar, lustig, nichtig, gefährlich, tückisch 'Gas' genannt wird.¹⁷

While these points are doubtless true, they leave an incomplete picture. It is clear that the Billionaire's Son's experiment is an isolated one - elsewhere capitalism remains intact. The Gentlemen in Black are representatives of the repressive industrial capitalism to whom the Billionaire's Son's system is anathema, as it creates dissatisfaction in their factories. However, they are dependent on gas for energy to run their concerns, so naturally the anti-industrial intentions of the Billionaire's Son horrify them. Indeed, the only reason the Gentlemen in Black have accepted his methods is because his socialist set-up has created the energy revolution in the first place. (Werke II, p. 36). Unlike the workers, who are later persuaded to produce gas for the sake of technological advance, the Gentlemen

in Black are concerned purely about cost-effectiveness if they were to give up using gas: "Die Kosten sind Ruin!" (p. 36). The potential power the Billionaire's Son holds dawns on him when he is confronted by these profiteers: "Bin ich der Antrieb, der das bewegt? - Meine Macht ist das?" (p. 35). However, the Gentlemen in Black are not prepared to accept the non-material benefits of the Billionaire's Son's philosophy. They threaten to turn to the government - and they expect their pleas to fall on sympathetic ears, for: "[...] schließlich rechnet die Welt noch mit Geld!" (p. 37). Later the government does ensure the continued production of gas. The Billionaire's Son thus not only fails because of a labour force which is mentally conditioned: his socialist experiment is isolated within a capitalist system. Naturally, it is this system which persuades the workers to reject the ideas of the Billionaire's Son: the view that Kaiser had "exposed socialistic collectivism as a pseudopanacea,"¹⁸ in Gas does not, therefore, take full account of the social situation portrayed in the play. In Gats, the old order is also very much intact. Shocked by the unwillingness of the underprivileged to obey, the Captain resorts to one of the very privileges which caused the social division in the first place - property: "Mein ist der Grund, auf dem das Siedlungslager sich erstreckt." (Werke II, p. 441).

In both Hinkemann and Gas the system is portrayed as well established both materially and in the minds of the oppressed; in both plays full emancipation can only be achieved by an internal change in the minds of the oppressed classes. Hinkemann, however, is more pessimistic here, as such complete change is viewed as being virtually beyond human capability.

The deep-rootedness of material values is reflected in many of Kaiser's plays. While Toller attacks capitalism in his first work, Die Wandlung, and continues to do so throughout the years of the Weimar Republic, criticism of the capitalist system develops slowly in Kaiser's work. Not until Die Koralie does capitalism as a repressive order come under Kaiser's scrutiny, and even in this play the assault on the system is eclipsed by the personal fate of the Billionaire. Nevertheless, many earlier plays deal with values which pervade a modern capitalist society. In these works, greed and materialism are presented as man's greatest faults. The first plays to deal with these deep-rooted materialist values are comedies. In David und Goliath (1905-06) for example, the property-owning class, represented by the characters Brandstrup and Magnusson, is avaricious and grotesquely portrayed. However, any critique of the wealthy is weakened by the fact that Magnusson and his ilk represent a kind of ideal to Sophus Möller and his family. Sophus is able to exploit Magnusson's belief that he has won a large sum of money, and clearly relishes his position as brewery director, even though he says: "Das Wohl der Gesamtheit steht höher als unser Appetit nach Hunger und Champagner!" (Werke I, p. 249). The lure of easy wealth is also what motivates Vierkant and his wife in Margarine (1906), but unlike the Möllers, they are portrayed negatively. In order to acquire a large inheritance their daughter Judith must be married by her nineteenth birthday. They are quite willing to sell their daughter off: first to the hapless Konstantin Strobel, whose pedantic Prussian sense of duty leads him to be suspected of fathering an illegitimate child - a complication which provokes the hypocritical moral indignation of the Vierkants

- and then to the ironically named Farbe, a colourless civil servant.

Der mutige Seefahrer (1910) is a good example of a Kaiser comedy into which the author has smuggled more thought-provoking ideas. The argument between the brothers Lars and Jens Krys, about the nature of financial success, remains unresolved. Lars attributes wealth to luck. Jens, a rather weak, mercenary, even unscrupulous figure himself,¹⁹ maintains a more political view:

"Wer hat denn Glück? Der Bauer, der seinen Hof beherrscht - oder Schmidt und Hansen, die Dänemark mit Filialen überschwemmen? Skrupellose Praktiker sind das, die über Leichen spazieren gehn wie über Disteln!" (Werke V, p. 590). Joe Jefferson, the self-made entrepreneur, is made to feel guilty and finally repentant over Lars' 'death', but we can only suppose that the methods with which he acquired his riches were as unscrupulous as his attempt to marry Lars' wife, Johanne. What is clear is that he has not enjoyed his relentless pursuit of wealth - he speaks of the "Starrheit meines Daseins, das ich drüben führte." (Werke V, p. 623). This confirms the anti-materialist - though apolitical - views of the artist Marius Madsen: "Schön ist die Kunst - brutal die Wirklichkeit." (Werke V, p. 614).

Von morgens bis mitternachts is similarly concerned with the power of money, but Kaiser now treats the material tragically, as with most subsequent excursions into the field. With this play, a more critical view of capitalist society begins to emerge in Kaiser's work. Nevertheless, as in the comedies described above, Kaiser concentrates on wealth, rather than the wealthy: despite evidence of social conditioning, society is not shown consistently to be deliberately manipulated, but is pervaded with illusory values.

Initially the Cashier is exploited, but he quickly escapes his dull existence, and the play subsequently concentrates on the effects money is capable of having. Although the Cashier, like Sophus Möller and the Krys brothers, also acquires sudden wealth, his confrontation is not with one or two rich characters, but with an entire society imbued with materialist values. The Cashier's 'journey' is a prolonged experiment, an attempt to discover the true value of money: "Wo ist Ware, die man mit dem vollen Einsatz kauft?!" (Werke I, p. 483). He finds only disappointment, from the callous brushing-aside he is given by the rich Italian woman, to the money-grabbing which follows his confessional speech in the Salvation Army Hall. Money may gain the Cashier access to places otherwise barred to him, such as the judges' balcony at the cycle races, or the ballroom, but the "Spitzen" (Werke I, p. 500) he demands cannot be fulfilled, as all that can be bought is illusory and sham, like the temporary classlessness he buys at the cycle race, or the string of either drunken, ugly or wooden-legged girls he bribes into his private booth. In the final scene he draws the inevitable conclusions about money:

Mit keinem Geld aus allen Bankkassen der Welt kann man sich irgendetwas von Wert kaufen. Man kauft immer weniger, als man bezahlt. Und je mehr man bezahlt, um so geringer wird die Ware. Das Geld verschlechtert den Wert. Das Geld verhüllt das Echte - das Geld ist der armseligste Schwindel unter allem Betrug! (Werke I, p. 515).

However, the attractions of money prove stronger than this condemnation. The Salvation Army Girl who had followed the Cashier throughout his journey betrays him for a reward, and sinners and Salvation Army soldiers alike battle for the remainder of the embezzled cash.

After the Gas plays, works which deal with a materialist society often include the concept of economic exploitation. Examples are Kanzlist Krehler (1921), Nebeneinander (1923) and Zweimal Oliver (1926). In Kanzlist Krehler, this exploitation is depicted on a purely personal level. Like the Cashier, Krehler, a "Büropygmäe" (Werke II, p. 151), a tiny cog in a gigantic economic machine, is hurled from his drab existence and recognises the true nature of his relationship with his wife. She is bound to him only by his capacity to earn, not by love. Frau Krehler is a curious figure: she is a housewife who attends to her husband's domestic needs, yet she dominates his life in order to thrive and grow fat. She has shamelessly exploited him: "Mein Herzblut - mein Brustblut - mein Beinblut: alles gesogen - gezehrt, gezapft," (Werke II, p. 169); she is now "faul [...] von Satttheit". (p. 170). This petty bourgeois home is a microcosm of the exploitation and economic slavery of which Krehler is a victim professionally. His revenge is to 'sack' his wife.²⁰ Frau Krehler remains interested only in her material welfare: she opportunistically transfers responsibility for her upkeep to her son-in-law, Max; when Krehler throws first Max and then himself from the balcony, her final cry, "Krehler----!!!" is "drohend". (Werke II, p. 185).

Nebeneinander is a further work in which materialist, selfish values pervade society. However, this society is also representative of contemporary Weimar, as references to recent war and a high inflation rate show; it is characterised by class division and abject poverty, from which very few are able to profit. One such opportunistic profiteer is the "Gelegenheitsagent" (Werke II, p. 289) Neumann, who is "in Geschäften eiskalt." (p. 303). Neumann is admired in this society,

rather than the altruistically inclined Pawnbroker: the Proprietress of the guest house says - with reference to Neumann -: "...ich decke meine Kundschaft mit meiner Person!" The Japanese Gentleman who remarks, "man soll vielleicht immer die Wahrheit sagen," (p. 297) however, is suddenly no longer a valued customer in the eyes of the Proprietress. This crass materialism is mirrored by the inability to recognise any crime not directly related to material property, which is confirmed by the accusations of the Gentlemen in the casino (pp. 310-312), and deplored by the Pawnbroker: "Es wird Himmel und Hölle in Bewegung gesetzt um einen gestohlenen Teppich - um ein Fahrrad - tausend Telephone schnurren: haltet den Dieb!" (p. 326).

Zweimal Oliver is similarly apolitical in its conclusions, but once again the idea of exploitation occupies a prominent role in the play. While the work concentrates on the individual fate of Oliver, it is nothing like as private as the domestic world of Krehler. The Director of the music hall in which Oliver works is very similar to the Showman in Hinkemann: a misogynistical, exploitative and unscrupulous profiteer who has pandered to the sensationalist desires of his audience to the detriment of acts like Oliver's. Talent is of little importance in his dance troupe, only a girl's physical attributes count. Although Oliver is tied to the unusual employment Olivia provides, he tries desperately to prevent his daughter from being dragged by the Director into the same vicious circle of economic slavery. Despite his fears, Oliver cannot argue with her logic: "Für Geld -- muß ich es tun," (Werke II, p. 479) which echoes his own "Ich muß es tun -- für Geld." (p. 469).

Like Toller's Showman, whose concept of morality extends only as far as honouring a contract, the Director is hypocritical; after suspecting Oliver of stealing the money received from Olivia, he subsequently pockets the cash himself: "Er läßt ein Vermögen bei einer Dirne liegen - schon der Leichtsinn ist sträflich." (Werke II, p. 496). Inability to look after money seems to be the worst possible offence, as society judges people by their material success. Oliver sees through the Director easily enough and attempts to 'buy' his daughter back:

Es wird der klarste Handel von der Welt:
solange der Schacher mit Menschenfleisch
blüht, spielt Geld eine entscheidende Rolle.
Entscheiden Sie sich, Herr Direktor. Sie
leben um des Geldes willen!! (Werke II,
p. 495).

In his search for escape, Oliver finds, like the Cashier, that the promise of money is illusory. In the asylum, Oliver finds solace: he finally reaches a place where money can no longer affect his life, even though the capitalist is represented here as well.

B.J. Kenworthy is correct in saying that Oliver finds shelter from a lunatic world in an insane asylum.²¹ However, Kenworthy does not stress the roles of exploitation and money in that world. Money enslaves all: it determines Oliver's - and his Daughter's - fate, and greed for it is the root cause of the Director's exploitative nature. Money links Oliver to Olivia - with tragic consequences - and leads his Daughter to misunderstand him in the restaurant scene. In Toller's Hoppla, wir leben!, a world driven mad by perverted values also pronounces the misfit - who perceives this madness inherent in the established order - insane. The psychiatrist, Professor Lüdin, claims a ruthlessly competitive, Darwinistic society is a healthy one: "Das Leben ist

Kampf. Wer die stärksten Fäuste hat, gewinnt. Das ist absolut normal." (GW III, p. 109). The Banker who spends day and night chasing profits is regarded as diligent and industrious, and only Karl Thomas, unable to accept these standards of normality, sees that the Banker's obsessive pursuit of money has ruined the latter's health. In Wunder in Amerika (1931), which Toller co-wrote with Hermann Kesten, the banker William Money is similarly prevented from leading a peaceful life by his wealth. Karl Thomas recognises this - officially normal - madness, and confronts Lüdín with it: "Die gleichen Menschen, die hier als Irre bewacht werden, galoppieren draußen als Normale und dürfen die Andern zertrampeln." (GW III, p. 110). At the root of this glossed-over insanity lies the idea that everyone has his price, as the Banker himself emphasises: "Heute ist die einzige Fundierung Geld. Hat einer die ersten Hunderttausend, hängt er den Idealismus an den Hutständer." (GW III, p. 80).

While Kaiser often concentrates, in particular in his early plays, on the materialism which is the symptom of a sick society, Toller not only looks at these symptoms, but attempts to portray the causes of such social ills. Thus he portrays establishment figures who are truly in control of society. Even Neumann is shown to be more of an opportunist, rather than one who controls; he knows how to use society's obsessions but he does not create them. When members of the ruling class are depicted in Kaiser's plays, they are often the revolutionary protagonists. We shall investigate the wide implications of the concept of the revolutionary-from-above in the next chapter. In Mississippi and Der Silbersee, plays which approach those of Toller in their depiction of ruthlessly repressive capitalism, the government (Stimson), the military

(the General), and the aristocracy (Luber and Laur) are fully in charge. In Masse Mensch we are shown speculators deciding on the fate of thousands as they cynically direct the course of the war; in Die Maschinenstürmer we witness a debate in the House of Lords. In Feuer aus den Kesseln the military and reactionary judiciary collaborate to crush the mutineers. In Der entfesselte Wotan Toller depicts a reluctant Republic still firmly in the grip of right-wing institutions. Wotan is also an opportunistic beneficiary of the system, but his supporters are the figures who really control society. Capitalism is willing to tolerate, even finance, Wotan's antisemitic, reactionary "Genossenschaft", and not only tolerates, but encourages the counter-revolutionary.²² (GW II, p. 300). The various establishment figures who support Wotan are useful to him because of their potential economic clout: Karauschen, despite being a sober, and, ironically, Jewish banker, is willing to fund Wotan's madcap schemes; Schleim's opportunistic and unprincipled business experiences²³ also prove useful. While Wotan distrusts the capitalist - he speaks of a decadent Europe in which the "Schieber polstert den Hintern mit französischen Schinken!" (p. 259) and of the "Pestsumpf der Zinsknechtschaft" (p. 283) - his fascist organisation relies on the support of the old order, and is useful to the latter if it helps to destroy any progressive, revolutionary tendencies. The link between capitalism and fascism, noted by Toller in his essay "Reichskanzler Hitler", is also alluded to in Hoppla, wir leben! (GW III, p. 31) and is explored - once again in a comedy in Nie wieder Friede! (1934-36).



Industrialism - A Greater Evil?

Despite the Billionaire's Son's isolation in a capitalist system, Kaiser does not go on to expound some Trotskyist theory of proletarian world revolution. The Billionaire's Son believes in a certain Marxist inevitability of the collapse of capitalism: "Aber ich bin nur schneller den Weg vor euch gelaufen, den ihr alle ^{einmal} gehen müßt: aller Lohn in alle Hände!"²⁴ (Werke II, p. 36). However, this division of wealth is just another form of slavery to the greater evils of industrialism and specialisation. The latter affects the Cashier of Von morgens bis mitternachts and the Scribe, the workers and even the Engineer of Gas, while industrialism has ensured that the redistribution of profits has not freed the workers from the sheer monotony of their mindless work. One Girl describes how her brother, a worker killed in the explosion in the Billionaire's Son's gas plant, had been reduced to an automaton who used only one of his hands - to operate a lever - during his entire working day. (Werke II, p. 39). This sort of alienation produced in many writers and thinkers an aversion to industrial work; among these was Gustav Landauer. In his key work, Aufruf zum Sozialismus (first published in 1911), he writes:

Die große Masse der Menschen ist von der Erde und ihren Produkten, von der Erde und den Arbeitsmitteln getrennt. Sie leben in Armut oder in Unsicherheit; es ist keine Freude und kein Sinn in ihrem Leben; sie arbeiten Dinge, die zu ihrem Leben keine Beziehung haben; sie arbeiten auf eine Weise, die sie freudlos und stumpf macht.²⁵

These ideas clearly influence Gas; they are also echoed in Die Wandlung. In this play, industrialism also creates drudgery: "Gewaltige Maschinen donnern Tage und Nächte / Tausende von Spaten sind in immerwährender

Bewegung, um immer mehr Schutt auf den Geist zu schaufeln." (GW II, p. 59). Friedrich stresses the alienation brought about by industrial work: "Ich kenne dich, Mädchen, feinknochig und märzart [...] ...Aber nun stehst du in der Fabrik. Von morgens bis abends schlägst du immer wieder einen Hebel zurück." (p. 58). The factory is also identified with prison. (p. 43). In Masse Mensch however, anti-industrial sentiments are met with a realistic response from the Woman: "Erkenntnis ist: / Fabrik ist nicht mehr zu zerstören / [...] Seele des Menschen bezwinde Fabrik!" (GW II, p. 81). While it is certainly implied in Die Wandlung that capitalism is the root cause of the problems associated with industrial work, the idea of a shift in power bringing about a solution first emerges in Masse Mensch. An unjust system based on profiteering and exploitation is identified without reservation in Die Maschinenstürmer as the root cause of social misery. Anti-industrialism is the product of political shortsightedness; destructive Luddism is combined with doubts about modern urban life: "Man müßte aufs Land zurück... Wir haben das Blut der großen Städte wie Gift in unserm Leib." (GW II, p. 173). Jimmy Cobbett counters this directionless dissatisfaction with a realistic, yet optimistic message even more emphatic than that of the Woman: "Und der Tyrann Maschine, besiegt vom Geiste schaffender Menschen... wird euer Werkzeug, wird euer Diener!" (p. 143).

This combination of realism and optimism is retained in "ZIT" (Zentralinstitut der Technik) - the eighth in a series of letters which form Toller's "Russische Reisebilder" in Quer Durch - even though the letter begins with an horrific description of the Institute's methods, which are aimed at "die Mechanisierung jeder einzelnen menschlichen Bewegung..."²⁶ This description seems to have more in common with Kaiser's visions

of dehumanised workers in the Gas plays, than with the pro-industrial ideas evident in Toller's works:

An etwa hundert grauen uniform gebauten Tischen arbeiten hundert uniform gekleidete Frauen und Männer. Das graue Gewand soll Frauen und Männer als Geschlechtsangehörige neutralisieren. [...] In vier geschlossenen Reihen marschieren die Arbeiter in militärischer Ordnung auf, jeder bleibt vor einem Tisch stehen. Das erste Knarrzeichen der Maschine ertönt. Jeder Arbeiter tritt an seinen Tisch. Ein zweites Knarrzeichen. Jeder Arbeiter ergreift sein Instrument. Das dritte Knarrzeichen. Jeder Arbeiter beginnt zu arbeiten.²⁷

Toller admits these methods make him feel uneasy,²⁸ but he nevertheless sees their positive aspects; first, he rejects the Landaueresque yearning for a revival of individual craftsmanship: "In unserer differenzierten Gesellschaft, in der Rationalisierungsformen notwendig sind, in der das Prinzip der Arbeit am laufenden Band in allen großen Fabriken eingeführt ist, wäre es sinnlos, wollten wir zur handwerklichen Kleinarbeit zurück."²⁹ Thus the ZIT's methods are seen as nothing more than a means of reducing the amount of drudgery in a worker's life through increased efficiency. For Toller, the redistribution of the profits from this work is all-important: "Es kommt nur darauf an, für wen der Arbeiter Arbeit leistet, ob für sich, seine Klasse, für die Gesellschaft, oder für eine Minderheit von Ausbeutern."³⁰ In Gas, as we have seen, this redistribution fails because industrial work is dehumanising no matter who is in charge, but also the continued existence of a competitive capitalist system places enormous demands on the workers, forcing them to continue the relentless production of gas in order to fuel an expansionist economy. The possibility of the results of the ZIT's experiments being exploited because of the pressures of a capitalist world does not, curiously, occur to Toller. He believes that the Institute's aim - namely,

to reduce the working day to two or three hours will be adhered to by a socialist system. Toller also has great faith in man's ability to shake off the threat of mechanisation: "Und schließlich, seien wir ohne Furcht, der Mensch ist von Natur keine Maschine. Gegen vollkommene Mechanisierung wird sich in ihm sein elementarer Spieltrieb aufbäumen."³¹ Thus, although he stresses the all-important role of economic circumstances in the article "Weltrevolution",³² Toller has great faith in the individual's ability to influence things for the better, and certainly has a greater such faith than Kaiser shows in Gas.

In Gas, control of the means of production has passed into the workers' hands, albeit only in the Billionaire's Son's plant. Yet these workers are far from liberated, which prompts the Billionaire's Son to conceive a future society based on agriculture. The return-to-nature plans of the Billionaire's Son have been attacked for their naivety: Silvio Vietta, for example, refers to them derogatorily as a "Schrebergartenvision".³³ Vietta contrasts the anti-industrialism evident in much Expressionist drama with the attitudes of the Woman in Masse Mensch.³⁴ However, the nature of the industry in the world of Gas is far more threatening than anything Toller, or any other writer of the time, ever envisaged, and therefore demands more drastic solutions. Despite his idealism and Expressionist rhetoric, the Billionaire's Son's anti-industrialism is based on human survival. The gas plants do not threaten employment as the machines do in Die Maschinenstürmer, they are not manifestations of technological progress for good, which are merely in exploitative hands; rather, they kill quite directly by exploding at regular intervals. Kaiser uses an absurd paradox - the gas formula "Stimmt - und stimmt nicht!" (Werke II, p.

16) - to attack a form of industrial progress which has made social questions irrelevant;³⁵ in the nuclear age this paradox has acquired a certain legitimacy, thereby making this anti-industrialism seem *Somewhat* prophetic, rather than irrational. In Die Maschinenstürmer, Jimmy Cobbett fights a superstitious fear of technology, but in Gas this fear is quite justified. Toller always refused to believe that technology could supersede its creator, man, while Kaiser initially viewed technological advance with a distrustful eye.

Gas. Zweiter Teil (1918-19) however, rejects the Billionaire's Son's plans and reflects Toller's position more than its predecessor. In Gas II, industrialism is not so much an evil *per se*: it is much more important that it is in the hands of an exploitative elite. While it is true that the masses in Gas II are exploited by being in such dull, unimaginative occupations - rather than being threatened with unemployment - and that they are therefore similar to the workers of Gas or Die Wandlung, it is nevertheless the *use* of this drudgery by a ruling class which is of decisive importance. Gas II is in fact the realisation of Henry Cobbett's nightmarish vision of a highly-mechanised future society:

[...] die alten Fabriken sind außerstande, die Bedürfnisse der Völker zu befriedigen, neue Fabriken, gewaltige Fabriken, kolossale Fabriken werden den Brotlosen die Tore öffnen. England hat gar nicht so viel Brotlose, wie diese Gigantenmäuler von Fabriken in prächtigen Bissen hinunter würgen, würgen, würgen... (GW II, p. 154).

Toller sees the immediate problems presented by rationalisation as relatively unimportant: machines in the hands of the ruling class only lead to greater exploitation whether working men and women are employed or not. This situation has been realised in Gas II. The Billionaire

Worker rejects his grandfather's regressive plan to return to the land, but his alternative is hardly more satisfactory, as he pronounces judgement on a human race incapable of emancipation. As in Toller's plays, the drudgery of industrial work, designed to maximise profit, has the side-effect of dulling the imagination of the workers. Ironically, industrialism is capable of acting as a spur to revolution - as it causes dissatisfaction - but ultimately functions as a tool for subduing people and keeping them in line.

In Hoppla, wir leben! technology is viewed as something intrinsically beneficial to mankind (GW III, p. 83). Ernst Schürer perceives a similar attitude in Nebeneinander, in which machines are shown as useful tools. Schürer believes Kaiser turns away from his concern about industrialism during the Weimar years: "Gerade der Prozeß der Rationalisierung in der Industrie, den Kaiser immer angegriffen hatte, und der in der Weimarer Republik noch verschärft wurde, kommt gar nicht mehr in den Blick."³⁶ Schürer is restricting his conclusions to Kaiser's drama here: in 1923 Kaiser wrote the first chapter of a novel, which remained an untitled fragment and has since come to be known as [Albin Achilles]. Although the old-fashioned, pre-rationalisation cork factory in which Adam Achilles works is portrayed positively, as it requires skilled workers who are involved in the production process from beginning to end, Toller's view of rationalisation-as-exploitation is nevertheless reflected in this fragment. Machines are introduced to profit a cynical, hypocritical factory director.³⁷

Capitalism and War.

In Toller's work, war is consistently linked to the capitalist system which produces it. Toller's revolutionary position grew in turn out of the experience of war; his initial pacifism grew into socialism as he began to ask himself about the First World War's causes. "Die Frage der Kriegsschuld verblaßt vor der Schuld des Kapitalismus," (GW IV, p. 87) is the conclusion he recalls drawing in Eine Jugend in Deutschland (published in 1933). Kaiser's development is not as consistent in this respect: war is depicted either as the product of a manipulative authority (which can be, but is not necessarily capitalist), or as the result of the general depravity of man.

Rosemarie Altenhofer recognises the previously underrated³⁸ political elements of Die Wandlung, as does Richard Dove. However, both Altenhofer and Dove believe that the first six scenes are virtually apolitical. Altenhofer sees the first half of Die Wandlung as autobiographical,³⁹ whereas Dove claims that, from the Seventh Scene onward, the "point of focus has shifted from the war to the social order which prosecutes and prolongs it."⁴⁰ While this statement is no doubt true, it is surely not correct to see the first six scenes as lacking in political insight. Toller portrays the connection between capitalism and war even in the early scenes. A comrade-in-arms derides Friedrich's illusory values in the first scene in which we see him in the field: "Vaterland! Kenne kein Vaterland. Kenne Herren, die prassen und Arbeiter, die sich schinden." (GW II, pp. 23-24). This soldier is echoed in the Seventh Scene - when Dove and Altenhofer note that the play becomes more political - by the Woman whose visit finally brings about the transformation he had resisted

for so long: "Für Euer Vaterland! Für die paar Reichen, die prassen und prassen und uns aussaugen, die mit dem Ertrag unserer Arbeit galantes Spiel treiben." (p. 38). It is particularly significant that the war in Die Wandlung - while recalling the violent slaughter of the First World War - is a colonial conflict. Imperialism is conducted under the guise of enlightenment, an idea which is derided by the Soldier in the Third Scene: "Den Wilden die wahre Religion bringen? Mit Morden und Sengen. Ich bin der Erlöser, juchhe! Laß dir den Schädel zertrümmern, und die Seligkeit erwartet dich." (p. 23) In fact, the whole thing is done only "Für die Herren." (p. 23). Friedrich clings to values which are opposed by those which Toller himself came to adopt, even in these early scenes. In a sense, Friedrich is akin to Karl Thomas, the negative hero of Hoppla, wir leben!. Thomas is also repeatedly exposed to a more enlightened political viewpoint and also refuses to acknowledge this viewpoint again and again, until he is eventually converted (in Toller's preferred version of the play).

Several dream sequences serve to clarify the true state of affairs to Friedrich. One such scene sees a Professor explaining the repair work he undertakes on human beings in economic terms:

Wir könnten uns die positive Branche nennen,
Die negative ist die Rüstungsindustrie.
Mit andern Worten: Wir Vertreter der Synthese,
Die Rüstungsindustrie geht analytisch
vor -
Die Herren Chemiker und Ingenieure
Sie mögen ruhig Waffen schmieden
Und unerhörte Gase fabrizieren,
Wir halten mit. (GW II, p. 30).

Friedrich discovers that warfare exists purely for the benefit of industrial expansion and to enrich an exploitative economy. In this recognition he is

in agreement with the Kommissar, the character with whom he clashes over revolutionary tactics, who also sees through the capitalist conspiracy of war: "Wenn die Reichen noch nicht genug Paläste haben und raffinierte Lustvillen wünschen, sagen sie: Verdammt. Wir machen Krieg. Setzen sich hin, telefonieren ein paar Lügen in die Welt, lassen Krieg erklären." (GW II, pp. 48-49).

Masse Mensch begins where Die Wandlung left off: in Toller's second play, revolution grows out of severe repression of which war is a part. The Woman and her Husband clash in a workers' public house - in which the romanticised "Kriegervereinsbilder" (GW II, p. 67) echo the "verlogene Kriegsbilder" (GW II, p. 47) of Die Wandlung - over the capitalist state's use of war. In essence both agree that war is an instrument: "Krieg ist nichts als unterbrochener Waffenstillstand, / In dem der Staat, bedroht vom äußeren Feind, / Bedroht vom inneren Feind, beständig lebt," (GW II, p. 72) asserts the Husband defensively, while the Woman counters: "Sahst du die Börsen, die sich mästen / Mit Menschenleibern?" (p. 72). The difference in her perception lies only in her moral outrage. The Woman's insistence that capitalists line their pockets with war profits is brought to life in the Second - dream - Scene. Toller uses sparse language and macabre black humour to portray effectively the manipulative financiers who deal in "Menschenmaterial" (p. 73), and refer to war as "das mächtige gewaltige Instrument..." (p. 75).

The link between capitalism and war is regarded as established fact in Toller's subsequent plays. In virtually all of these plays, with the notable exception of Die Maschinenstürmer, war is historically fixed

as the First World War. In Die Maschinenstürmer, the connection between capital and war forms a smaller part of the more general theme of class conflict than in Die Wandlung, as Toller has moved from the emotional intensity of the experience of war to an historically-informed analysis of the revolution. In the Prologue Lord Byron's critique-from-above is scorned by the other peers. Byron believes the roots of Luddism lie not in some intrinsic perniciousness on the part of the workers, but in the example given by the rulers: "Die Politik der 'großen Männer'! Die Politik der Räuberkriege!" (GW II, p. 119) is at fault. Byron does not deny that the less draconic measures he advocates would be costly, but then the money is available, and poured into warfare: "Für Kriege war Ihr Beutel immer weit geöffnet." (p. 120). This initial scene is later echoed by Jimmy Cobbett, again with reference to imperialistic war:

Die großen Lords regieren England. Für
Pöbel ist kein Platz im Hohen Haus. Sie
führen Kriege, den Profit zu mehren, fremdes
Volk zu unterjochen. Und nennen ihre
Räuberkriege Kriege für das Wohl des Landes.
(p. 143).

Hinkemann's mutilation was first taken to represent Germany itself,⁴¹ but his emasculation is probably more symbolic of his complete impotence and is, of course, the direct result of a war brought on by capitalist society. That the violence and brutality of war can be a profitable business is underlined by the Showman, who points out that the fashion has changed (superficially, as it turns out, for the "Kultur" which the public craves is no less bloodthirsty): "Mit Kriegsgreuel-Panoptikum verdienen Sie heute keine zehn Pfennig mehr." (GW II, p. 228). In Hoppla, wir leben! Karl Thomas remembers, as Toller does in his

autobiography, asking himself about the true causes of war: "Für Gold, für Land, für Kohlen, für lauter tote Dinge, sterben, hungern, verzweifeln die Menschen..." (GW III, pp. 56-57, cf. GW IV, p. 87). In Feuer aus den Kesseln war is also caused and perpetuated by a capitalist elite. The sailor Sachse is outraged by the fundamental difference between proletarian cannon-fodder and the bourgeois professional officers who do well out of the war:

Wir waren Packer und Metallarbeiter und Eisenbahner und Kutscher. Wenn der Krieg zu Ende ist, werden wir wieder Packer und Metallarbeiter und Eisenbahner und Kutscher sein. Anders wie die Offiziere. Für die ist der Krieg ein Handwerk. Ein Handwerk mit Risiko. Wenn es bei ihnen nur ums Vaterland ginge, müßten sie sich schämen, dicke Gelder einzustecken, sich den Bauch vollzuschlagen und aus der Liebe zum Vaterland ein Geschäft zu machen. (GW III, pp. 147-148).

Alwin Köbis is more direct when he accuses representatives of the elite in Court: "Sie sind der Feind, und nicht der Heizer auf den englischen Schiffen, mit dem ich vor dem Krieg zusammen geschuftet habe, und mit dem ich nach dem Krieg wieder zusammen schuften werde!" (p. 169).

While militarism is sometimes treated by Kaiser as a separate phenomenon from capitalism, or at least from a ruling, manipulative authority - as we shall see shortly - militarism is always nurtured by a specifically capitalist system in Toller's work. The ingrained old values of 'honour' through violence are always just another part of mass social conditioning, to the extent that blind obedience is produced by the hypnotic effect of words like "Befehl", "Staatsinteresse", "Ruhe" and "Ordnung". (GW II, p. 111). The officer who monotonously mouths these words in Masse Mensch

is echoed in Hinkemann by policemen crying "'Ruhe und Ordnung!' / 'Staatsautorität!'" (GW II, p. 212). These appeals soon bring about a "militärische Kehrtwendung" (p. 212) in the old soldiers who had only moments before been full of revolutionary zeal, shouting: "Nieder mit die Hunde von der Reaktion!" (p. 212). Throughout the play we are reminded that old imperial values are still a feature of the new Republic: Großhahn puts a military march on the juke-box when he enters the inn, and at the end of Hinkemann's nightmare soldiers and military marches are greeted with "Soldaten! Soldaten! Hurra! Hurra!" (p. 233). These soldiers represent disciplined order in a chaotic, brutal world of sensational headlines. The streets are emptied by this one supposedly positive aspect of society; these soldiers, revered by everyone, are very like those in Kaiser's Ächtung des Kriegers (1929).

The connection between war and capitalism is first made by Kaiser in the Gas plays. It is capitalism which forcibly prevents the Billionaire's Son's revolutionary plans, by requisitioning the plant in order to fuel an imminent war. Gas II portrays capitalism gone mad: gas production fuels a war apparently destined to on into eternity. The exploitative ruling class now produces gas not for profit but for fanatical destruction. In Mississippi, Kaiser goes a step further. The government official Stimson predicts that capitalism will actually replace the conventional violence of armed conflict with commercial imperialism:

Ich will zugeben, daß rohe Gewaltakte wie Kriege in Zukunft unterbleiben - und die Macht sich anders ausdrückt: Geld. Woher soll es kommen, wenn der Handel geschwächt wird? Wenn wir mit dem Export unsrer riesigen Produktion die anderer Völker nicht erdrücken können, bis sie uns alle tributpflichtig sind? Das ist doch das Ziel moderner Wirtschaftsexpansion. (Werke II, p. 684).

Violence and terror are among the instruments of repression used by the King in Schellenkönig (1895). In this Blutige Groteske, the Marshalls threaten to kill the dissenting Servant whose laughter questions not only Court etiquette, but the legitimacy of autocratic power. Although violence and subservience are unhealthy features of society, they are in the interests - and therefore at least in part the products - of rulers. After all, somebody has to ~~persuade~~ the Marshalls to use their swords, and the brainwashed population of Schellenkönig bears witness to the success the powers-that-be have had in controlling the people.

However, in his early work, Kaiser is primarily interested in the effects of such manipulative authority, to the extent that militarism becomes a social ill without any obvious malicious instigators in Die Bürger von Calais (1912-13). Duguesclins is the representative of conventional military heroism. He wants to see the destruction of Calais and its harbour carried out by the citizens themselves, rather than see the English King capture them; to bow to the demands of the invaders would smear the honour of France: "Ist der Hafen dieses Handels wert - der mit der Ehre Frankreichs bezahlt wird?" (Werke I, p. 535). The idea that honour is solely derived from blood and destruction is so ingrained in the minds of the burghers that they are temporarily seduced by the false glamour of warfare: "Wir suchten den Ruhm nicht - nun rollt der Ruhm an unsere Füße! - Eustache de Saint-Pierre - sollen wir ihn nicht aufheben - und über uns streifen - als unser buntes Kleid?" (pp. 536-537). Duguesclins' 'loyalty' is not to France, but purely to military honour; when he perceives his cause to be lost among his fellow

Frenchmen, he offers his services as a mercenary to the English forces. While war is portrayed as the product of an imperialist elite, the English have presumably conquered Calais for material gain: ultimately it is a war-for-profit which brings about the conflict between Eustache and Duguesclins.

In Gilles und Jeanne (1922) a manipulative ruling class headed by a King who is cynical, hypocritical and isolated from his subjects, features relatively prominently. Nevertheless, the play concentrates on Gilles' brutal, animalistic depravity with which he not only wages war, but seeks to possess Jeanne as well. Jeanne does not choose to revolt against material power; when she says "Dich will ich überwinden - Gilles!!!!" (Werke V, p. 759), her wish is to overcome the entire chauvinistic ideology for which Gilles stands. She achieves this symbolically by discarding her weapons and armour, as the stage directions indicate: "Licht vom Himmel auf sie - bei jeder Handlung der Waffenniederlegung stärker." (Werke V, p. 760). Later her purity succeeds not only in transforming Gilles, but changes the populace and the representatives of the establishment, the Papal envoy and the King.

The rise of Nazism caused Kaiser to take a less abstract, more political stance regarding the problem of militarism. This position emerges clearly in Die Lederköpfe. Kaiser does not adhere to the conclusions of Die Lederköpfe in the later Ächtung des Kriegers. However, in Mississippi and Der Silbersee militaristic brutality is so firmly linked to a capitalist class,⁴² that we may conclude that Die Lederköpfe marks a turning-point in Kaiser's attitude toward militarism. In these later plays imperialism - which had been attacked only briefly by Socrates in Der gerettete Alkibiades (Werke I,

p. 803) - takes on a central role; war as the result of perverted human nature or false glorification of physical virility becomes less prominent in Kaiser's work. In Die Lederköpfe, Kaiser comes to the conclusion that the evil of militarism is more than a perversion inherent to man: it is encouraged by individuals who stand to gain something from it.

Kaiser appears to reach this conclusion in the process of writing Die Lederköpfe. Although the City Commander emphasises the class divisions upon which constant warfare depends,⁴³ and although the violence needed to quell the impending troop rebellion is more important than the war itself in the opening scene, war is depicted both as an insatiable animal (Werke III, p. 13), and as a form of plague (p. 21), metaphors which portray war as an autonomous, self-perpetuating evil. Similarly, the Field Commander's self-inflicted mutilation represents the general depravity of man, his descent into a world of animalistic brutality, which Basileus' Daughter recognises: "Du bist kein Mensch mehr, du bist ein Tier, das frißt und brüllt." (p. 39). This accusation prompts the Field Commander to see into the depths of his own inhumanity: "Ich bin das Tier, das wütend ausbricht und zerstört. Mit Recht trage ich die Kappe über meinem unmenschlichen Gesicht." (p. 43). It is not the physical appearance of the Field Commander which repulses the Daughter - indeed, she feels she could bear the sight of his wounds were they the result of battle⁴⁴ - it is the cold and calculating volition behind the drastic method with which he has achieved victory for Basileus and satisfied his relentless ambition.⁴⁵

Initially then, militarism and war are presented as

depravities symbolised by violent animal imagery and the Field Commander's inhuman act. The latter's transformation brings about a shift of emphasis in the play. The Daughter feels she would be able to love the Field Commander if he were to stop the planned mass-mutilation: "In Blendung schließe ich die Augen - und sehe dich: wie du die Macht zerschlägst, die mit Zerstörung herrscht!" (p. 45). The emphasis is on the power which maintains itself through violence and destruction, rather than on violence alone. From this point the play takes on a revolutionary tone. The Field Commander is able to exonerate himself by bringing about the death of the tyrant Basileus.

The Third Act confirms the shift in emphasis by concentrating on the perverse and violent ambitions of Basileus. His plan to punish the mutineers by mutilating them and turning them into "Lederköpfe", is merely an overture to a vision of an anonymous, enslaved society, in which the will of the individual is subjugated by dictatorial and violent power.

The Briand-Kellogg Pact of 1928, which sought to outlaw war, prompted Kaiser to write Ächtung des Kriegers, a Platonic dialogue condemning the political short-sightedness of the age.⁴⁶ In condemning war but continuing to honour the warrior, Kellogos fails to attack the problem at its root and therefore only helps to prolong it. Thus leaders such as Kellogos and Kephalos are part of a conspiracy to elevate the status of the soldier while at the same time declaring war immoral. The act of war is declared stupid and hateful even by the authorities, who are not portrayed as cynical liars, but merely as complacent and shallow, even though they are diverting attention from the true evil while actually appearing to have the most noble

intentions. Socrates is not concerned with any perpetration of lies from above, though Kephalos may bemoan the philosopher's anti-establishment stance.⁴⁷ He prefers to speak of the "Irrtümer meiner Mitmenschen" (Werke III, p. 192), rather than a deliberate conspiracy. Thus this short dialogue is somewhat ambiguous in its perception of authority, for Socrates does not insist that society's rulers - who employ and arm soldiers - be called criminals, but that the soldier be referred to as such: "So nenne deine Ehrenmänner auch Verbrecher." (p. 192) Even though Socrates demands that Kellogos complete his potentially revolutionary thought process,⁴⁸ it can be argued that Socrates fails to complete it himself.

Let us summarise the findings of this chapter. We can detect distinct developments in the work of both writers: generally, Kaiser's views change through the Weimar years and approach those of Toller. Toller launches his attack on capitalism right from his first play, identifying it as a repressive, war-mongering system. For a while Toller cherishes the belief that the ruling class are themselves deluded victims, but this idea is dropped after Die Maschinenstürmer. By contrast, the attack on capitalism in Kaiser's work develops slowly, via critiques of an obsessively materialistic society and indirect assaults on an oppressive order. The repressive use of industrial work, a theme also reflected early in Toller's writing, eclipses the attack on industrialism per se in Kaiser's work. In Toller's plays, militarism is always encouraged by the capitalist order; Kaiser initially blames brutality and subservience to a violent ideology, but in later works militarism is increasingly linked to capitalism or at least to a malicious authority.

We will now turn our attention to the problems Kaiser and Toller encountered when contemplating revolutionary change of contemporary society.

Notes.

1. Hinkemann finds this out later when he tries to give up his job: "Mann, ich lasse Sie durch Polizeigewalt zur Arbeit zwingen. Mann, Kontrakt ist Fundament bürgerlicher Gesellschaft. [...] Mann, Staatsmacht steht hinter mir." (GW II, p. 229).

2. This route is so unconventional that critics have seen the social criticism of Die Koralle as irrelevant. Wolfgang Paulsen, for example, believes the Billionaire's fear to be purely an inner condition, and interprets the play psychologically. (Paulsen: Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes, p. 9). Bernhard Diebold, as we have seen (Introduction, Note no. 58), comes to the somewhat dramatically-formulated conclusion: "Man erhoffte Karl Marx, aber es wurde Schopenhauer." (Diebold: Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser, p. 65). It is true that the social aspects of Die Koralle are swept aside by the Billionaire's personal obsessions, but his 'flight' is clearly caused by his poverty as a boy. Paulsen believes he proves his assertion by pointing out: "Auch der Vater schon war geflohen," (Perspektiven, p. 9) but the Billionaire's father had deserted his family in order to escape the misery of extreme poverty. Ernst Schürer believes the Billionaire is fully aware of social problems, but uses his philosophy to cut himself off from them: "Die soziale Kritik ist zwar nur ein untergeordnetes Element in Die Koralle, aber sie kann nicht wegdiskutiert werden." (Schürer, Ernst: "Die Gas Dramen". In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 97).

The social questions and the Billionaire's 'flight' are inextricably interwoven; it is no doubt because the Billionaire rejects his wealth in favour of the Secretary's past, that this point is often missed. The Secretary's past however, is so enviable not least because it was characterised by material comfort. Diebold criticises Die Koralle for not being homogenous (c) (Der Denkspieler Georg Kaiser, p. 11), as the psychological implications of the Billionaire's desire to flee the memories of poverty overshadow the social problems illustrated in the first three acts. However, not only are these social problems the root cause of the Billionaire's own troubles, but we learn enough about the Billionaire's personal obsessions in the first three acts to make the shift in emphasis, which undoubtedly does take place in the final two acts, entirely plausible. For example, in Act II, the Museum Director, who has refused a donation from the Billionaire remarks: "Wie eine Kreuztragung lastet das auf uns - diese Masse der Vergangenheit, von der wir nicht wegkommen ohne

Gewalt und Verbrechen - wenn es sein muß!" (Werke I, p. 671). The Billionaire not only feels the weight of the past, but is willing to commit violent crime in order to escape it. He is clearly impressed by the Museum Director's views: "Seine Anschauungen haben mir gefallen. Diese innere Unabhängigkeit, die er hat - daß es für ihn nur die Zukunft gibt - die die Vergangenheit auslöscht -". (p. 672).

3. The Museum Director may have progressive ideas on art, but his political ideas are reactionary: he suspects the Billionaire's Son of trying to relieve the monotony of his idle life a little by taking a job as a stoker.

4. The Captain has used his advantageous economic position to create the "Weltsiedlungsunion" and this is treated by the settlers with a mixture of gratitude and scorn: "Er hat sich die hungernde Kreatur der Erde gekauft und bei sich einquartiert. Er bezahlt alles. Es muß ein wunderschönes Gefühl sein, sich alles kaufen und alles bezahlen zu können." (Werke II, p. 437).

5. Kenworthy, for example, sees Gats as continuing the 'Geist' versus 'Leben' arguments of Der Geist der Antike (1905) and other early works: "Being ultimately stronger, the vital force, manifested here as the reproductive urge, annihilates what threatens it." (Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser, p. 77).

6. Kuxdorf, Manfred: Die Suche nach dem Menschen im Drama Georg Kaisers, p. 95.

7. The Captain's attitudes toward privilege and true greatness are anything but elitist: "Begreift euer großer Mensch, mit welchen Nöten von euch seine Ankunft erkaufte ist, muß er sein Dasein verfluchen!" (Werke II, p. 439).

8. Twice Doris reveals her racism: she is shocked that Nathan, a black man, refers to Kehoe as "Bruder Noel" (Werke II, p. 656), and later she discloses one of the reasons for wanting her son back: "Schließlich bleibt er mein Sohn [...] den ich nicht mit einem schwarzen Bruder Nathan Choräle blöken lasse." (p. 661).

9. Doris' only reaction to the perpetual downpour is: "Für die Schirmindustrie ausgezeichnet. Manche machen jetzt Millionen." (Werke II, p. 655).

10. Kenworthy, B.J.: "Die Dramen 1928-1945: Apotheose

der Subjektivität". In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, pp. 128-129.

11. "Eine Protestaktion gegen den Silbersee". In: Magdeburgische Zeitung, 22 February 1933. (Photocopy held in GKA).

12. Dove, Richard: Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller, p. 218.

13. Bütow, Thomas: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers. Hartmut Lüdke, Hamburg 1975, p. 218.

14. GW II, p. 38: "Wir sind Vieh... nur Vieh... Wir sind immer nur Vieh."

15. Großhahn is an atheist and sees God as just another lie perpetrated by the ruling class: "Mit Gott für König und Vaterland, mit Gott für Menschenmord, mit Gott für Obergott Mammon. [...] Man meint bald, wenn die Herren es nicht für nützlich halten, wenn sie sich schämen, 'Ich' zu sagen, dann sagen sie 'Gott'. [...] Den Glauben überlaß ich denen, die Profit draus schlagen." (GW II, p. 199).

16. This attitude echoes the sexual licence produced by miserable social conditions in Die Maschinenstürmer.

17. Diebold, Bernhard: Anarchie im Drama. Frankfurter Verlags-Anstalt AG, Frankfurt a.M. 1921, pp. 404-405.

18. Kauf, Robert: Faith and Despair in Georg Kaiser's Work, p. 18.

19. Jens Krys is quite willing to compromise his moral integrity for the sake of material welfare - he attempts to sell Lars life insurance, which his brother cannot possibly afford; he tries to hide Lars' 'resurrection' from Jefferson - yet he is too cowardly to undertake the journey to America himself and face a dying man.

20. Frau Krehler uses economic terminology herself: "Krehler hat mir gekündigt." (Werke II, p. 170).

21. Kenworthy sees Oliver as an artist who "confuses the material world with the ideal world of his fantasy and finally bridges the gap between them by using his art as a springboard into lunacy." (Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser, p. 159).

22. At his arrest Wotan is told he is well-known as "ein Bürger von staatserhaltender Gesinnung" and that he will be free in "zwei, drei Tagen." (GW II, pp.

300-301). The differences in treatment between right-wing and left-wing political prisoners greatly occupied Toller. He himself was treated unconstitutionally in Niederschönenfeld, where his Festungshaft status was frequently abused. By contrast, Count Arco, the murderer of Kurt Eisner, was allowed considerable freedom in his Festungshaft, pardoned early and celebrated as a hero in the press. (See GW V, pp. 190-191; also published in Justiz-Erlebnisse. Litpol, Berlin 1979, pp. 74-75).

Manfred Durzak believes Wotan's arrest shows a hopeful Toller: "Komödienhaft im Sinne eines geschichtsphilosophischen Happy Endings ist nur dieser Schluß, der die Hoffnung Tollers ausdrückt, daß die Wirklichkeit noch jenem Taumel widerstehen könnte, den die völkische Aufbruchsbewegung Hitlers bereits damals auf der politischen Bühne des Zeitgeschehens zu inszenieren begann." (Durzak, Manfred: Das expressionistische Drama II. Ernst Barlach - Ernst Toller - Fritz von Unruh. Nymphenburger, Munich 1979, p. 148). However, the authorities' sympathetic treatment of Wotan also shows a Republic unwilling to defend itself against the right-wing revolutionary. As Toller himself wrote upon Hitler's light sentence in 1924: "Die Republik, die ihre gefährlichsten Gegner 'nicht ernst' nimmt, beweist damit, daß sie sich selber nicht ernst nimmt." (GW V, p. 174). The extreme right also contrasted the fate of right- and left-wing prisoners. However, Alfred Rosenberg's indignant comparison of Toller's case with that of Hitler appears somewhat ironic in the light both of Hitler's actual sentence and the abuse of Toller's honourable status: "Seit einigen Jahren sitzt in Niederschönenfeld der Jude Ernst Toller in Ehrenhaft. Er wurde wegen Hochverrats zu 4 Jahren Festung verurteilt. D.h. ein Hebräer, der nicht nur gegen eine Staatsform meuterte, sondern gegen das Deutschtum schlechtweg, bekam 4 Jahre Ehrenhaft, nachdem man ihn mit rotgefärbten Haaren aus einem Kleiderschrank gezogen hatte. Jetzt steht vor Gericht Adolf Hitler. [...] Und zu diesen beiden [Hitler, Ludendorff] gesellen sich Männer, denen selbst der Staatsanwalt des Freistaates Bayern innerhalb der kleindeutschen Novemberrepublik das Zeugnis edelsten Mannestums ausstellen muß. Und dieser selbe Staatsanwalt bekommt es fertig, für einen Adolf Hitler eine Strafe zu beantragen, die doppelt so groß ist als jene, zu der der Rätejude Toller aus Krotoschin [sic] verurteilt worden ist..." (Rosenberg, Alfred: "Und - Ernst Toller?" In: Kampf um die Macht. Aufsätze von 1921-1932. Zentralverlag der NSDAP, Munich 1939, pp. 275-276). Not only Toller's birthplace is wrong here (he was born in Samotschin), but the length of his prison term: he was sentenced to five years in gaol.

23. Schleim has a history in publishing which he describes thus: "Die Revolution haben wir verlegt. Alle Sünden wider das Blut haben wir verlegt. Den teutschen Geist haben wir verlegt. Wir haben eine Sendung erfüllt. Wir haben unsere Kasse gefüllt." (GW II, p. 265).

24. This quotation is the only trace of Marxism in an otherwise Anarchistic work. Gustav Landauer, whose ideas clearly influenced the Billionaire's Son's agricultural reform programme, condemns Marxism as "die Pest unserer Zeit und der Fluch der sozialistischen Bewegung!" (Landauer: Aufruf zum Sozialismus, F.J. Marcan, Cologne 1925, p. 5).

25. Landauer: Aufruf zum Sozialismus, p. 16.

26. Toller: Quer Durch, p. 121.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., p. 123.

29. Ibid. Toller points out elsewhere that the opposite process to industrial rationalisation (i.e. that which Landauer and the Billionaire's Son advocate) can also be subject to capitalist exploitation: "Die Ausnützung des Menschen lohnt sich so sehr, daß es Fabrikbesitzer gibt, die Maschinen still stehen lassen und sie durch Handarbeit ersetzen. (Also das Umgekehrte wie in den vierziger Jahren tun.)" (Toller: "Heimarbeit". In: Die Weltbühne, Vol. XXIII, No. 25, 21 June 1927, p. 969).

30. Quer Durch, pp. 123-124.

31. Ibid., p. 124.

32. See Ibid., pp. 216-220.

33. Vietta, Silvio & Kemper, Hans-Georg: Expressionismus. Fink, Munich 1975, p. 94. As Ernst Schürer points out in his article "Die Gas Dramen" (in: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 94), however, this term ignores the idea's positive aspects, and the critical treatment it is given by Kaiser himself in Gas II. Schürer is alluding here to the Billionaire Worker's dismissive reference to the past: "Über Triften von Grüne lockte euch einer vor mir - ihr verwies ihn recht." (Werke II, p. 86).

34. Vietta & Kemper: Expressionismus, pp. 95-96.

35. Rosemarie Altenhofer comes to a similar conclusion when she compares Toller's No More Peace! to Die chinesische

Mauer by Max Frisch: "Denn mit der Bombe bedeuten totale Macht und Größenwahn eines Cain [i.e. Emil, in the German version Nie wieder Friede!] nicht mehr Gefahr für einige Völker, sondern das Ende alles Lebens. Vor dieser Zukunftsperspektive werden soziale Fragen vollkommen unerheblich, denn es geht nicht mehr um Gut oder Böse, um Mensch oder Sklave, sondern um die Existenz der Menschheit an sich." (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, pp. 293-294).

36. Schürer, Ernst: "Georg Kaiser und die Neue Sachlichkeit (1922-1932). Themen, Tendenzen und Formen". In: Symposium, p. 131.

37. The Director makes sure he is not as expendable as the workers: "'Ich bin selbstverständlich unkündbar.'" (Werke VI, p. 814); his lip-service to humanitarian principles (p. 814) echoes the hypocrisy of Ure in Die Maschinenstürmer.

38. Horst Denkler's view of Die Wandlung is a good example of the way in which the play has usually been treated by critics: it is seen primarily as a typical piece of Expressionist "Erneuerungs-drama" far removed from political reality. (Denkler: Drama des Expressionismus. Programm - Spieltext - Theater. Fink, Munich 1967, p. 215). As we saw in the Introduction, this view is part of a more general tendency to see Toller as an autobiographical and religious, rather than a political writer; we also saw how Rosemarie Altenhofer has pointed out that the "Bekenntnisdramatiker" label is a result of the autobiographical elements of Die Wandlung being attributed too much importance. In her article "Masse Mensch" Altenhofer summarises the point she had made in her dissertation: "Seit der Uraufführung von Tollers Erstlingwerk Die Wandlung (1919), einem vorrevolutionären, utopisch-anarchistischen Bekenntnis zur Wandlungsfähigkeit der Menschen, werden seine politischen Dramen vorwiegend unter dem Gesichtspunkt ihres autobiographischen Gehalts beurteilt, so daß die - schon auf Die Wandlung nur bedingt zutreffende - Kategorie 'Bekenntnisdrama' zum gängigen Maßstab für sämtliche Stücke Tollers wurde." (Altenhofer: "Masse Mensch". In: LGW-Interpretationen 55, p. 129. Originally published as "Nachwort" to the Reclam edition of Masse Mensch, Stuttgart 1979).

39. Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 25.

40. Dove: Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller, p. 67. It is true that the final scenes show a greater political awareness having been written or at least partly re-written after the Munitions Strike of January 1918. It is nevertheless wrong

to believe that the first six scenes are lacking in political ideas.

41. This interpretation led to the famous "Hinkemann Skandale", during which early performances of the play, originally named Der deutsche Hinkemann, were violently disrupted by nationalists, who saw in Hinkemann's disfigurement an insult to the Reich. Thomas Bütow convincingly rejects this idea, pointing out that Hinkemann himself is viewed sympathetically by Toller. (Bütow: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers, pp. 216-218).

42. In Der Silbersee this is demonstrated less obviously than in Mississippi by the song "Cäsars Tod". (Werke III, p. 238).

43. "Es kann nicht jeder Ball spielen. Das muß das Volk wissen." (Werke III, p. 17).

44. Like Europa (Europa, 1914-15), the Daughter of Basileus is impressed by healthy physical strength and certainly does not object to the idea of being promised to the Field Commander. She is 'socialist' like the Billionaire's Daughter and seeks fulfilment through a man, like the Woman Secretary in Gats. However, unlike the latter (but like the Woman in Masse Mensch) she places her social concerns before any personal ambition.

45. The Field Commander makes it clear that he hopes to succeed Basileus. (Werke III, p. 39).

46. Although Ächtung des Kriegers is set in classical Greece, it is nevertheless a direct comment on contemporary events. In his radio play 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!', Toller goes a step further than Kaiser and directly portrays the League of Nations disarmament talks in Geneva. ('Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' In: Würffel, Stefan Bodo (ed.): Frühe sozialistische Hörspiele. Fischer, Frankfurt a. M. 1982, pp. 95-115. The disarmament scene is on pp. 97-100). These talks also became the subject of his article, "Menschliche Komödie in Genf". (In: Die Weltbühne, Vol. XXVIII, No. 11, 15 March 1932, pp. 369-399). In both the play and the article Toller criticises the cynical abuse of genuine hopes for disarmament by capitalist states; in both, the idealistic Russian proposal to scrap all arms is seen, in its startling simplicity, as a worthy one, but one which can never be accepted by 'realistic' bourgeois politicians.

47. "Uns Alten jedoch verursacht er [Sokrates] Kopfschmerzen." (Werke III, p. 189).

48. "Ich wünsche nur, daß einer auch das zu Ende denkt, was er zu denken begonnen hat." (Werke III, p. 192). Kaiser is suggesting here that contemporary politicians could do worse than emulate his methods, for he once described his concept of writing thus: "Das Drama schreiben ist: einen Gedanken zu Ende denken." (Werke IV, p. 579).

Chapter II

PROBLEMS OF REVOLUTION

The Limitations of Material Revolution.

Revolution? Der Besitz wechselt die Taschen.
- Georg Kaiser: Werke IV, p. 631.

This somewhat cynically-phrased statement reflects Kaiser's distrust of revolutions which not only attempt to create a more egalitarian, democratic society by changing external social and power structures, but which subsequently claim to have eradicated all suffering. Nonetheless, a total rejection of revolution is not evident in Kaiser's work: Die Bürger von Calais and Hölle Weg Erde both portray successful revolutions in which new values replace old ideologies; in other works revolutions are not achieved, but are nevertheless striven for, their objectives are considered worthwhile. This quotation, with its emphasis on 'property', highlights Kaiser's disappointment at what the term 'revolution' has come to mean in reality: a superficial shift in the control of material wealth. Toller could also never accept material change as a cure-all for society's ills, and attacked the 'banal optimism' of scientific socialists. Although he never renounced his belief in the creation of a new, more just social order, Toller repeatedly warned that socialism would not eradicate all human suffering: "Wir wissen, daß auch der Sozialismus nur jenes Leid lösen wird, das herrührt aus der Unzulänglichkeit sozialer Systeme, daß ein Rest bleibt von unlöslicher Tragik, bestimmt durch den Einbruch kosmischer Kräfte." (GW I, p. 139). By contrast, Toller recalls in Eine Jugend in Deutschland the idealistic, but nevertheless materially-

based hopes common among the young immediately after the First World War: "Sie wollen mehr als den Kaiser treffen, anderes als nur das Wahlrecht reformieren, ein neues Fundament wollen sie bauen, sie glauben, daß die Umwandlung äußerer Ordnung auch den Menschen wandle." (GW IV, p. 79 - emphasis mine). However, this belief was not shared by Toller even at the time he refers to here, for it is not borne out by his first plays. While his first protagonists - Friedrich and the Woman - certainly attack material problems, the solutions they propose are by no means purely materialistic. They believe that material solutions alone do not produce an improved mankind; parallel to their material revolutionary efforts run spiritual ideas. They demand, as Toller had in 1917, a "Revolutionierung der Gesinnung". (GW I, p. 34).

In many of his plays, Georg Kaiser very similarly postulated that revolution should not only take material circumstances into consideration, but should have as its goal nothing less than the transformation of the hearts and minds of men. The problems discussed in Chapter I may be linked to material circumstances, but these circumstances, being so deep-rooted, are capable of producing more complex difficulties than could be solved by purely material measures. Kaiser first touched on this problematical aspect of revolution in his first work Schellenkönig. Rebellion, the King asserts in this play, is not enough; it must be followed by reconstruction:

Doch ein Betrüger ist, wer ungestüm
den Tempel schändet in entfachter Wut,
den Altar umstößt und die Bilder stürmt,
die Kerzen löscht und lüftet frei die Wolken
wirrenden Weihrauchs und die Hallen leert
von Kranz und Kelch und brünstigem
Gebete -
und läßt sie leer!¹ (Werke I, p. 35).

Old ideologies must be replaced by new values, an idea on which Kaiser elaborates in Die Bürger von Calais. Eustache's material success is relatively quick: he manages to prevent his fellow burghers from engaging in further pointless and suicidal conflict with the English forces, and thereby preserves the city's newly-constructed harbour. Eustache also defeats his adversary Duguesclins, but this victory in itself is not enough; Eustache, through his sacrificial suicide, succeeds in defeating the entire destructive ideology of militarism.² It is not enough to replace old figures of authority with new ones, revolution must be accompanied by a change in man himself. This longing for regeneration is at the heart of much of Kaiser's work, and plays a particularly important role in Toller's early work.

Both Friedrich and the Billionaire's Son are aware of the limitations of material socialism; both are aware that revolutionary change throws up new problems. Friedrich wants revolution, but it must be infused with a faith in mankind: "Ich aber will, daß ihr den Glauben an den Menschen habt, ehe ihr marschiert." (GW II, p. 59). The young, idealistic Toller, as yet without first-hand revolutionary experience, sees this march not against, but with people, encompassing all levels of society in which even the powerful are deluded victims of cynicism and hate, as we have seen: "[Ich weiß] Um dich, du Reicher, der du Geld anhäufst, und alle verachtest, die andern und dich selbst." (GW II, p. 59). The Billionaire's Son has already completed a material revolution - in his own plant - which continues to struggle against the pressures imposed by a capitalist society, as we have seen. This revolution has been achieved peacefully, because

the Billionaire's Son is not a member of the oppressed proletariat, but an enlightened humanitarian in a position of considerable power. However, the old love of money has naturally not disappeared with the redistribution of profits, for the plant runs non-stop (Werke II, p. 13), and the previous oppression has been replaced by the alternative form of slavery Friedrich warns against. An oppressive system can remain without oppressive rulers, and only appeals to man's own humanity, to his inner transformation (which is in fact a return to his true original self), can bring about his liberation. Thus Friedrich longs: "- O, wenn ihr Menschen wäret, - unbedingte, freie Menschen," (GW II, p. 60) while the Billionaire's Son urges: "Sammelt euch aus der Zerstreuung - und aus der Verletzung heilt euch: seid Menschen!!" (Werke II, p. 47).

Revolution and inner transformation go hand in hand for Friedrich and the Billionaire's Son; they are part of the same process, as they are for the Woman and Jimmy Cobbett. The Woman advocates strike as a means of stopping the war, but also of creating a new society. Through peaceful revolution the masses can be transformed into a brotherhood of man: "Masse soll Gemeinschaft sein. / Gemeinschaft ist nicht Rache." (GW II, p. 95). This newly-created sense of community will automatically lead to a better world, the Woman believes: "Gemeinschaft zerstört das Fundament des Unrechts. / Gemeinschaft pflanzt die Wälder der Gerechtigkeit." (GW II, p. 95). Jimmy also believes that a "Menschheitsbund der freien Völker..." (GW II, p. 187) must be the goal of material change.

Toller's concern with the limitations of material socialism finds its ultimate expression in Hinkemann. Later plays advocate a socialism without romantic

illusions, an attitude developed after sinking to virtual despair in Hinkemann. We shall see however, that Toller's viewpoint after Hinkemann did not necessarily mean that the problems encountered in the plays written in prison were solved. In Hinkemann, revolution has not created a more enlightened proletariat as petty differences between workers, originally encouraged from above,³ have not disappeared. Sebaldu Singegott and Peter Immergleich have turned away from class conflict and embraced religious and bourgeois ideals respectively; Max Knatsch, an anarchist, and Michel Unbeschwert, a Marxist, are the committed revolutionaries. Knatsch is viewed with some critical distance⁴ - his Landaueresque anarchistic ideas are shown to be as incapable of taking account of the individual as those of the "Vulgärmarxist"⁵ Unbeschwert, and he proves to be as weak as the other workers when Hinkemann's emasculation is revealed. Despite this distance, Knatsch criticises the historical determinism of Unbeschwert as naive: "Wenn ihr nur eine Formel gefunden habt!" (GW II, p. 217). As far as Knatsch is concerned, socialism can only grow out of the revolutionary will of the people, who do not need to wait for the course of history to bring about a new society: "Keine besonderen 'Verhältnisse' brauchen sie abzuwarten." (GW II, p. 217). Knatsch mirrors Toller's own view here:

Die deutsche Revolution ist nicht daran zugrunde gegangen, daß das Volk nicht reif war. Jenes Wort von der notwendigen Reife eines Volkes zum Sozialismus ist dialektischer Seiltanz. [...] Kein Mensch wird reif allein durch Wissen, man muß ihm die Möglichkeit zum Marschieren geben, dann wird er, trotz Schwankens, trotz hemmender Nebenwege, zum Ziel kommen. (GW I, p. 167).

Clearly then, Knatsch's idea of the revolutionary road to socialism is close to Toller's own. However, both Knatsch and Unbeschwert think in terms of material

revolution, although Unbeschwert relies on scientific methods in order to bring about change. Unbeschwert has no easy answers to Hinkemann's hypothetical questioning: "Eine verteufelt verzwickte Frage," (GW II, p. 220) while Knatsch dismisses it: "Das sind Spitzfindigkeiten!" (p. 220). Their visions have no room for the misfortunes of some individuals: "Ihr seht eure Grenzen nicht... es gibt Menschen denen kein Staat und keine Gesellschaft, keine Familie und keine Gemeinschaft Glück bringen kann." (p. 226). The fact that both laugh at Hinkemann shows they are capable only of theoretical and intellectualised pity for these individuals; when faced with a concrete situation, their socialist ideals are as empty as Großhahn's. Hinkemann can only conclude that the rival reform programmes of Unbeschwert and Knatsch are irrelevant in the face of their inability to change themselves in a more fundamental way:

Wie müßt ihr anders werden, um eine neue Gesellschaft zu bauen! Bekämpft den Bourgeois und seid aufgebläht von seinem Dünkel, seiner Selbstgerechtigkeit, seiner Herzensträgheit! (p. 225).

Rosemarie Altenhofer believes that Hinkemann is a weak demonstration of the irresolvable tragic suffering which Toller insisted would continue to exist even if social injustice were to be swept aside, because the reactions of Unbeschwert, Knatsch, Immergleich and Singegott are produced by the attitudes prevalent in a pre-socialist state.⁶ While this is quite true, Hinkemann appears to realise that these reactions could be different in an established socialist society: "Wie müßt ihr anders werden, um eine neue Gesellschaft zu bauen!" This statement implies that a new society could be built by people who are inwardly transformed, even though Hinkemann goes on to claim in the same speech that there are people who would continue to

suffer under any new social order. (p. 226). Here Hinkemann claims that a socialist society could never provide happiness for all. Thus there is a further ambiguity in Hinkemann in addition to that discussed in Chapter I, as each 'optimistic tone'⁷ in the play is offset by a more pessimistic one: "Und [die Menschen] könnten anders sein, wenn sie wollten," (GW II, p. 246) is followed by "Aber sie wollen nicht." Neither statement is final; the play's last line exemplifies Hinkemann's feeling that the world is on a knife's edge: "Jeder Tag kann das Paradies bringen, jede Nacht die Sintflut." (GW II, p. 247).

Although the idea of inner regeneration as a prerequisite to true revolutionary change is not dismissed in Hinkemann as decisively as Altenhofer suggests,⁸ Toller does not address this theme again in most of his subsequent plays; a certain acceptance of the suffering inherent in the human condition characterises his later writing. Indeed, there are indications that he adopted this viewpoint a good deal earlier. In January 1921, while still working on Die Maschinenstürmer, Toller wrote to Kurt Wolff:

Freudige Bejahung des Schicksalsnotwendigen - und der Sozialismus ist für mich eine soziale Schicksalsnotwendigkeit. Was kommt es darauf an, ob er Paradies bedeutet oder nicht! Nur Schwächlinge brauchen Glauben an ein Paradies auf Erden.⁹

Toller could be seen to be applying the term 'weaklings' here to Kaiser, for the latter writer's more optimistic works (with the exception of some of his short stories written in exile) continue to hold out utopian hopes for a paradise on earth, despite the cataclysm of Gas II, and the sharper criticism of material and social reality evident in plays such as Die Lederköpfe, Mississippi or Der Silbersee. Noel Kehoe, the protagonist

of Mississippi, takes comfort from his individual salvation; Olim and Severin, in the face of material oppression, find solace in their mutual solidarity. The optimistic predictions at the end of Der Silbersee do not stop at the material circumstances, however; as in Die Wandlung, or in so many other Kaiser plays, these predictions go beyond the immediate causes of misery. The hope remains rather vague as a consequence. An "Anbruch der Helligkeit" (Werke III, p. 288) is promised, but the shape this new era is to take is no more specific than the intense, ecstatic new beginning which ends Hölle Weg Erde, a work which was written thirteen years earlier.

However, the problem of the limitations of material socialism was by no means permanently resolved in Toller's mind. Although Hoppla, wir leben! and Feuer aus den Kesseln are illustrations of Toller's undogmatic commitment to the possibilities of material socialism, 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!', a short radio play written in 1930, combines a documentary style with a rather pessimistic message. At about the time he wrote Hoppla!, Toller published an article on publicly funded housing in Vienna, which included the following cautiously optimistic statement:

Wir stoßen immer wieder auf die gleiche Schwierigkeit: Wir müssen neue Gebilde schaffen, müssen uns aber bewußt sein, daß der alte Adam in diese neuen Gebilde einzieht und nur mählich und durch gütigen Zwang sich in ihm die verkümmerten Gemeinschaftsinstinkte neu bilden.¹⁰

A shift in material circumstances, in other words, can, in the long-term, bring about a change in people. In 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' this cautious optimism appears to have been abandoned; in this short work Toller returns to the idea that people must change

themselves from within, and, because such an event is seen as extremely unlikely anyway, the play's concluding tone is one of resignation. The majority of people is seen to be too complacent to be moved by the suffering of others:

Die Menschen lesen nach dem Abendbrot ihre Zeitungen, gähnen und legen sich zu Bett. Wenn sie ein bißchen Phantasie hätten, wenn sie sähen und hörten, was sie lesen - vielleicht würden sie nicht so ruhig schlafen. Aber wer hat Phantasie, mein Lieber. Wer will sie haben? ...Vom Leiden des andern lesen ist eine nette Abwechslung. Das Leiden des andern fühlen - nee... so genau wolln wir das gar nicht wissen... So sind die werten Mitbürger. Gute Nacht.¹¹

The Masses: Social Conditioning, Fragmentation and Solidarity.

The revolutions portrayed in both Toller's and Kaiser's work usually fail - largely because the masses in turn fail to comprehend a truly revolutionary message, a failure due to the success of social conditioning. Fragmentation among the oppressed causes the resurgence of the old order. Real social regeneration is rarely successful in either Toller's or Kaiser's work. However, we shall see that there are elements of optimism regarding the masses' potential in the work of both writers.

While Die Wandlung shows an optimistic Toller full of the belief in the power of reason - a belief paralleled in Die Bürger von Calais and Hölle Weg Erde - Kaiser's first work Schellenkönig betrays a lack of faith in the masses. The people do not recognise the King as an ordinary man, stripped of the absurd garb which accompanies and symbolises his privileged position. They need authority, and can only be moved to counter-

revolutionary violence, although the King idealistically - but briefly - intends to mobilise them for more worthwhile purposes.

There are important differences in Schellenkönig from later plays of Kaiser's in which the masses are able to act only in conservative reaction to progressive ideas. We have seen that the Servant's rebellious laughter is merely a rejection of old values; it does not replace these with anything new, even though they are clearly absurd. The King, unlike the later revolutionaries-from-above in Kaiser's work, has not shed his snobbish dislike of the masses. When he feels threatened by their screams, he cries: "Treibt sich nicht / der wüste Haufe aufgewühlt und frech / auf das Portal!" (Werke I, p. 30). It also emerges that the King is not very serious about replacing the old values with anything more just, for the speech quoted above (p. 79), is immediately followed by: "Richter [sic] nicht auf an des / Verworfenen Stelle einen andern Trug!!" (Werke I, p. 35 - emphasis mine). In other words, the King cannot imagine anything more worthwhile taking the place of the existing system, as all systems are seen to be farcical; he believes that the old lie can only be replaced by a new one. This view betrays a cynicism in the young Kaiser which he never quite equals in his dramatic work again, a cynicism which contrasts vividly with the idealistic hopes of Toller's own debut, Die Wandlung.

While Rudolf Bussmann believes that Kaiser's negative judgement of the masses in Schellenkönig is off-set by the comic tone of the play, he is correct in saying: "Festzuhalten ist immerhin der konservative und wandlungsfeindliche Zug der Volksmasse und deren Gleichsetzung mit den bestehenden Verhältnissen."¹² This conservatism

is enshrined in a rigid society in Die jüdische Witwe (1904). Judith finds herself at odds with society twice: both times she is dragged to the temple to fulfil demands imposed on her by law; between these two instances she shocks and offends the double standards which govern a male-dominated society. In the end, Judith successfully snubs this society and transgresses its laws with the support of the establishment, but the old values remain in place. Kaiser may have chosen a quotation from Nietzsche's Also sprach Zarathustra - "O, meine Brüder, zerbrecht, zerbrecht mir die alten Tafeln!" (Werke I, p. 117) - but Judith's 'revolution' is an isolated one, even an unintended one, and as such its implications are not grasped by society.

The same conditioned loyalty is later exhibited by the masses in Von morgens bis mitternachts. The Cashier, testing the power of money, 'finances' the freedom of the crowds in the cycle-racing stadium. Initially, he is not disappointed; the stands become a "Galerie der Leidenschaft" (Werke I, p. 495); the crowds become a faceless mass in the excitement the Cashier generates because of the prize money he offers. A state of complete classlessness is soon reached, as the crowds are united in their unleashed passions: "Menschheit. Freie Menschheit. Hoch und tief - Mensch. Keine Ringe - keine Schichten - keine Klassen. Ins Unendliche schweifende Entlassenheit aus Fron und Lohn in Leidenschaft." (Werke I, p. 498). Even this naked passion is instantly controlled by the strains of the national anthem and the appearance of the Emperor in the royal box. Ingrained tradition thwarts the Cashier's microcosmic 'revolution'.

In fact, the Cashier chooses a poor venue in which to hold this 'revolution', for the sports arena is in any case a place in which the masses are offered

only temporary escape from the pressures which beset them. The cycle races are themselves a means of buying the masses off - consequently, the 'freedom' which the Cashier finances is no more than escape heightened to hysterical proportions. The naked passion which the Cashier is so pleased to have brought about is certainly not socially productive rebellion, for the old order asserts its influence easily, by a demonstration of power which only the Cashier regrets. Kaiser is of course aware of the limitations of the passions the Cashier unleashes, for his purpose in writing this play was to demonstrate the superficiality of the value of money. The Cashier himself has an inkling of these limitations when he concedes that the crowds he bribes are "Rein nicht - doch frei!" (Werke I, p. 498). He subsequently finds out that they are nothing of the sort. The passions unleashed in this scene have little in common with the reasoned approach of Friedrich and his descendants, for Toller's socialist revolutionaries plead for conscious revolution, with both liberation and enlightenment as joint goals.

In Die Lederköpfe, the old order reasserts itself easily as well, before it is finally defeated. The masses in this work are kept deliberately in perpetual fear. As a result, the solidarity of the oppressed (in other works a problem in itself, as we shall see) becomes irrelevant. The first uprising is supported by troops and civilian population alike, and takes place, significantly, while Basileus is away. His return immediately quells the rebellion; his reputation for gratuitous violence has become enough to maintain his position.

In Toller's plays the masses are viewed with sympathy both by the author and the revolutionary figure. In

the plays written before Hinkemann, this figure is a far-sighted visionary whose pleas for more than material change only find willing listeners in Die Wandlung. In Masse Mensch the Woman initially succeeds in uniting the exploited workers behind her peaceful revolution: "Wir rufen / Streik!" (GW II, p. 84) they cry unanimously, before the Nameless One arrives to exploit the baser desires for vengeance in the name of revolution. The masses are swung unanimously by the Nameless One, as they are by the Engineer in Gas, the Chief Engineer in Gas II, and the Fourth Settler in Gats. The Nameless One promises revolutionary action - "Masse ist Tat!" (GW II, p. 86) - while the Engineer and the Chief Engineer promise - illusory - power within the existing order: "Herrscher seid ihr..." (Werke II, p. 49); "Errichtet die Herrschaft!!" (Werke II, p. 87). The Nameless One may be making a plea for revolution, whereas the Engineer's aims are regressive and reactionary, but the methods employed by both are the same: both appeal to the baser desires among the masses, and promise more tangible gains than the visionary protagonists are capable of guaranteeing. This problem also occurs in Die Maschinenstürmer. The machine-wrecking which Wible demands seems to be a tangible, positive step forward to many of the other workers: only Jimmy and Ure realise that it would in fact be a counter-productive move. Jimmy, despite his ability to recognise Luddism as folly, has one tragic flaw: his faith in his fellow workers is too great. Toller is of course, as always, on the side of the workers in Die Maschinenstürmer. Nevertheless, he is fully aware that working-class origins are no guarantee against selfishness and incorruptibility. The Beggar warns Jimmy not to place too much trust in the weavers:

Halten alle Menschen ihr Wort, sind alle Menschen mutig, aufrecht, treu, selbstlos? Nein. Warum sollten es alle Arbeitsmänner sein? Weil sie 'Arbeitsmänner' sind? Du siehst sie, deucht mich, wie du sie sehen möchtest. Du hast dir neue Götter erschaffen, die heißen 'heilige Arbeitsmänner'. Reine Götter... treue Götter... weise Götter... vollkommene Götter... Englische Arbeitsmänner von 1815, du Träumer! Freundchen, mit Göttern verbündet kämpfen, heißt zum Sieg kommen, wie eine Apfelblüte zum Apfel kommt. Erwache, erkenne, daß du mit kleinen Menschlein, gutwilligen, böswilligen, gierigen, selbstlosen, kleinlichen, großmütigen...kämpfst, und versuchs trotzdem! (GW II, p. 174).

The antagonists also know how to exploit the prejudices of the masses - prejudices which are themselves the result of social conditioning and which the visionary protagonists insist must also be overthrown. In Masse Mensch, the Woman is derided by workers as an intellectual (GW II, p. 97), even though she is clearly an ally; at another point her humanitarian compassion is attacked as female sentimentality by the Nameless One. (GW II, p. 96). In Gas, the Engineer easily persuades the workers to return to the plant once he refers derogatorily to their future as 'peasants', if they were to allow the Billionaire's Son's anarchistic anti-industrial plans to come to fruition. "Helden seid ihr - in Ruß und Schweiß!" (Werke II, p. 49) is how the Engineer portrays the proletarians, even though they have just been complaining about the drudgery their work involves. The masses fail to complete the revolutionary process they begin because their sights had always been set too low - in demanding that the Engineer be sacked, they have failed to grasp the problem at its root. They are rebels, not revolutionaries; like John Wible, who is first seen at the head of a group of workers hanging blacklegs in effigy, they are content to vilify a scapegoat.

In Gas II the shortsightedness of the masses has become complete ignorance; the repression under which they have suffered has become so acute that the Chief Engineer has never actually heard of the word 'strike.' (Werke II, p. 68). Although a parallel process takes place to that in Gas, in that the workers are seduced by the false promises of the Chief Engineer, rather than persuaded to build a new society by the Billionaire Worker, the masses are not aware of the potential power that they wield (unlike in Gas, where a strike does at least take place): "Was mit uns?" and "Sind wir mächtig?" (Werke II, pp. 82-83) they cry repeatedly. The only form of power the masses understand is that under which they have suffered. The alternative offered by the Billionaire Worker is too abstract, and the workers in any case lack the courage and the imagination to initiate anything new. This lack of imagination is due to the stupefying nature of their work, i.e. to the system which keeps them mentally in chains even when a show of unity does temporarily free them from the bonds of their work.

In the post-war, post-revolutionary Weimar portrayed in Hinkemann, the Slater and Tiler scene shows that there are still bitter divisions within the working-class, while the lust for sensationalism has not been overcome either. The socially conditioned despair of the proletariat prompts escapism because, as we have seen, it is suggested that the solutions offered by socialism can only be embraced by a fully united and morally strong working-class: conditions which, Toller seems to be saying in this play, are beyond the reach of most men and women. Grete finds escape in her affair with Großhahn, who himself advocates escape - even though he pays lip-service to socialism.¹³

However, in his pursuit of sensation and his condemnation of conventional moral standards as a "Gottseibeius fürs arme Volk" (GW II, p. 204), Großhahn collaborates with the ruling-class whose hypocrisy he exposes. Like John Wible, he is characterised as an individual with individual motivations, but his base sensationalism, like Wible's jealousy, is a stumbling block in the way of working-class solidarity, which the ruling-class willingly exploits.

The collaborator is produced by illusory aspirations among workers; although this figure does reap some material rewards for turning against his own kind, he continues to occupy a position in which he not only supports the exploitation of his fellows, but remains oppressed himself. Thus Henry Cobbett may have taken on bourgeois values¹⁴ and a hatred of his own class (GW II, pp. 131-132), he may claim he has climbed to the position he occupies on his own merit when he asks Jimmy: "Verlangst du, daß ich wieder sinken soll, verlangst du von mir, daß ich fallen lasse, was ich mit meinem Schweiß errang?" (GW II, p. 133), but remains a grovelling coward who is hardly treated as an equal by Ure. Kaiser also recognises the collaborator's role in preventing successful revolution. In Gas the masses collaborate unanimously with the system which oppresses them, so the individually characterised collaborator is not needed. The fat Landjäger in Der Silbersee is a similar figure to Henry Cobbett; he too identifies with the values of an oppressive ruling-class without actually originating from that class, and without ever climbing any higher than the rank of a fairly lowly civil servant. He describes the inhabitants of the rural ghetto, from which Severin originates, as sub-human primitives: "Das sind wieder Wilde geworden, die bei der Zivilisation

kein rechtes Unterkommen gefunden haben." (Werke III, p. 209). The fat Landjäger cynically extols the virtues of the police as security forces per se, as guardians of a system in which superficial law and order is more important than justice or progressive change: "Wer keine Machtmittel einzusetzen hat, der kann vom Ölberg herniedersteigen und die Heilsbotschaft verkündigen - es nützt ihm nichts. Er hätte sich vorher der Polizei versichern müssen." (Werke III, p. 207). Thus a supposedly apolitical force becomes an instrument of political oppression in its collaboration with the existing order.¹⁵ In Mississippi, Doris Thompson is similar to these collaborators; though a more passive figure, her apathy is characteristic of many who embrace bourgeois values. She has succumbed to the glitter of New Orleans, with its material distractions - like Großhahn, she is an escapist in pursuit of sensation: "Sonst will ich meine Tage in New Orleans verleben, als wäre jeder mein letzter." (Werke II, p. 665). Noel Kehoe sees that the collaborator's aspirations must remain largely illusory, in order to sustain an unjust system: "Es bringt euch alle von Sinnen zu sein wie sie - und bleibt doch immer nur ihre Sklaven, die an ihren Türmen von Palästen bauen, bis euch der Odem schwindet." (p. 660). The Hotel Servant in Hoppla! is similar to Doris in that he is apathetically reluctant to change anything. Unlike Doris, he has not reached a situation where he can live in considerable material comfort. Instead, he has attempted to build himself a better future within the existing system, but after saving his hard-earned money for years on end, he suddenly finds it has been gobbled up by rampant inflation. Far from wanting to change anything, he can only conclude: "Mir ist alles wurscht. Ich erwarte von niemand nichts." (GW III, p. 90). The Hotel Servant's official representation, the Betriebsrat, has also done nothing to improve

the lot of the employees in the hotel: it is part and parcel of a system which can only disappoint the ordinary man, whose apathy and lack of hope is understandable, because it is fostered and encouraged by a system which tells him he is worth very little. This feeling of inferiority is reflected by the Head Waiter, who rebukes Thomas for making a sarcastic comment about Kilman: "Davon verstehen Sie nichts. Wenn er mit dem Bankier speist, wird er wohl seine Gründe haben. Sonst wäre er kein Minister." (GW III, p. 90). The lack of working-class resolve which Thomas finds everywhere in everyday life, remains a great frustration to him. While a small group of workers has adopted the mature revolutionary outlook of Albert Kroll, most of the ordinary people, such as the Old Woman in the polling station, or Pickel, are kept in horrifying political ignorance.

In Mississippi, Stimson, the character who defends the imperialistic goals of capitalism, points to the in-built weakness of a system which relies on the cooperation of the masses: "Woher soll es kommen, wenn der Handel geschwächt wird?" (Werke II, p. 684). The system begins to panic as soon as any signs of revolutionary activity become apparent. Why do these revolutions not catch on? Both Toller and Kaiser clearly saw that the victims of capitalism are too easily seduced by its apparent advantages, without ever realising that the system relies on many of their hoped-for rewards remaining illusory.

Despite the cynicism of Schellenkönig, Kaiser too wrote plays in which the masses have his sympathy. One such play is Gats. The Captain's wish to see gats introduced into society repels the settlers not only because they, the poor, are to make the sacrifice,

but because the drug prevents conception, and so undermines the human desire to have children. The Captain falls victim to the furious mob, and Kaiser's sympathy is clearly with the two Secretaries, who by the end of the play see the Captain's death by lynching as inevitable. Nevertheless it must be noted that the behaviour of the masses is no different from that in other plays, as their aims are not progressive, but rather against progression which has taken the wrong form. This fact excuses the masses in Kaiser's eyes, even though they are portrayed as instinctive and unreflective. Their one positive feature is that they are capable of acting in the interests of human survival: their triumph is thus a triumph for humanity, against an artificial order from above and against the replacement of the healthy by the unnatural.

The interests of the masses are also viewed sympathetically by Kaiser in Die Lederköpfe. However, the masses are incapable of articulating their grievances successfully without the help of Basileus' Daughter and the Field Commander; these individuals' defection to the ranks of the oppressed makes revolution possible. In both Mississippi and Der Silbersee the oppressed masses voice their own grievances and act accordingly. Whereas in Gas and Gas II these grievances are briefly articulated, but are soon forgotten, the downtrodden in the late Weimar plays are not bought off by the established order. Admittedly, they do not succeed in any tangible, immediately recognisable manner either: Noel Kehoe is in fact defeated, and Olim and Severin are left with nothing but their solidarity for one another, after they are materially dispossessed by Frau von Luber. In the First Act, Olim, initially a pawn in the hands of the ruling class, regrets having shot Severin, although he fights off his nagging conscience:

"Verkehrte Welt. Was geht's mich an." (Werke III, p. 213). Kaiser once again employs the device of a lottery win in Der Silbersee - it is this financial windfall which enables Olim finally to turn his back on a job which he perceives to be unjust, but upon which he is of course materially dependent - and thus makes Olim's philanthropy toward Severin the result of pure chance. However, it is significant that Olim refuses to use his money in order to make himself richer, as the Lottery Agent advises him to do; it is also important that Frau von Luber succeeds in tricking Olim into signing over his wealth. The implication here is that the values of a scheming, ruthless, morally bankrupt ruling class (represented by Luber and Laur) can only be countered by a new set of values borne by the oppressed when united, rather than by individuals. This is underlined by Olim's and Severin's plan to create a private paradise together, which is dashed when they find they have been swindled by Luber. However, once poor again, Severin and Olim remain friends; Severin does not rekindle his vengeful hatred of Olim. It is here that the play's message of the importance of solidarity emerges. Both men recognise the destructive role which personally-motivated emotions play in undermining that solidarity: "Zorn und Angst - " begins Olim, and Severin completes the thought: " - das sind die beiden Leidenschaften, die das Elend anrichten." (Werke III, p. 282). Initially, they cannot see the importance of this message, for they plan to commit suicide rather than return to a life in which material circumstances force them to combat one another. However, the voice of Fennimore instructs them of their mission: "Euch entläßt die Verpflichtung, / weiter zu leben, noch nicht. / Euch erhebt aus Vernichtung / eure besondere Pflicht." (Werke III, pp. 287-288). It is here that Kaiser departs from the realism which dominates the

play up to this point: he does not know how to combine an optimistic message with a realistic ending. The dawning of a new age of human solidarity and altruism is symbolically hinted at when the wintry landscape around the frozen lake turns green, but Kaiser is unable to be more specific. In Noli me tangere (1919), Kaiser had self-critically admonished the artist who sets his sights beyond what ordinary mortals are capable of achieving. Prisoner 15, an artist, is brought down to earth by Prisoner 16; he is told to be "Bei geringsten ein geringer - und doch fördernd mit Schonung das Ganze!"¹⁶ (Werke II, p. 225). In Nebeneinander, the Pawnbroker, like Prisoner 15, chases an illusory ideal.¹⁷ In Mississippi, the General had not been able to imagine a successful revolution, as violent insurrection is bound to meet with resistance from above: "An diesem Konflikt müssen sie scheitern und alle ihres Geistes, die nach ihnen kommen." (Werke II, p. 690). While the General sees no solution to this problem, he overlooks the fact that Kehoe and his followers are isolated revolutionaries: the theme of solidarity in Der Silbersee is the answer to the pessimism of Mississippi.¹⁸ The vague promise of better things to come may be typical of Kaiser's work, the emphasis on mass solidarity is not. Toller's play Hoppla, wir leben! manages to convey much the same message as Der Silbersee without departing from the strict realistic style in which it is written. In Toller's preferred version of the play, Karl Thomas, an enthusiastic but unrealistic revolutionary (and as such a figure not dissimilar to Prisoner 15 in Noli me tangere), is converted to the patient revolutionary tactics of his comrades. Toller explains Thomas' transition himself in "Arbeiten":

Da begreift er die alten Kameraden, die
in zäher Alltagsarbeit die Idee weiterführen,
er will das Irrenhaus verlassen, aber, weil

er begriffen, weil er zur Wirklichkeit die Beziehung des reifen Menschen gewonnen hat, läßt ihn der psychiatrische Beamte nicht mehr hinaus, jetzt erst sei er 'staatsgefährlich' geworden, nicht vorher, da er ein unbequemer Träumer war.¹⁹ (GW I, p. 147).

Solidarity and commitment become the traits of the revolutionary in a society in which reactionary values are established with renewed vigour. The stability of the society which Thomas wants to shake by assassinating Kilman is mirrored by the total - but nevertheless, in the long run, temporary - victory of reactionary elements in Der Silbersee. The necessity of day-to-day revolutionary work - a theme which dominates Hoppla!, but which appears in Toller's work much earlier²⁰ - is reflected by the ending of Der Silbersee. The promised regeneration of society is so vague and distant because the enemies of Severin and Olim are so powerful; much work remains to be done before the "Anbruch der Helligkeit". In a sense, Olim and Severin have much "revolutionäre Kleinarbeit" to perform before their message of solidarity can catch on among their own kind. The strength of Toller's play is that this interim, pre-revolutionary period is depicted realistically: while Olim and Severin are merely shown disappearing over the frozen lake toward an - eventually - more positive future, Karl Thomas is advised by Albert Kroll to find work somewhere and accept (without resigning his commitment to revolutionary aims) that radical change is not just around the corner.

Revolutionary change is - potentially - around the corner in Toller's next play, Feuer aus den Kesseln. For this reason the problem of how to keep revolutionary hopes alive at a time when revolutionary fervour is at a low-point becomes irrelevant. The problem of the masses is ignored in this play, as is the problem

of violence largely, as we shall see. For the first time since Die Wandlung, Toller turns away from the infighting among the revolutionary class, and concentrates on class conflict. The proletarian collaborator no longer exists except for the figure of Birgiwski, an agent provocateur from outside the ranks of Köbis and his friends. Although Toller does not characterise them as an indistinguishable, uniform mass - as he had in Masse Mensch for example - the oppressed, in this case sailors, are united at a grass-roots level; it is the SPD politicians who collaborate with the old order. However, parallel to the decline in Toller's faith in material socialism in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' runs a drop in his optimistic view of the masses. While 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' is written in the documentary style of Feuer aus den Kesseln, this radio play's pessimism toward man's resistance to change harks back to Hinkemann (see quotation no. 11 above).

The Problem of Violence.

We have seen that Toller's and Kaiser's revolutionaries, in their attempts to transcend the often rather meagre and counter-productive solutions offered by material socialism, often come up against the conditioned and reactionary masses, and falter. The disparity between the successes of Friedrich, Eustache de St. Pierre, and Spazierer on the one hand, and the failures of the Woman, the Billionaire's Son and the Billionaire Worker on the other, lies not in some difference in their revolutionary vision, but in the willingness of the masses to listen to reason.

What then, is the isolated revolutionary's course of action? It is on this point that Toller and Kaiser diverge. Kaiser's viewpoint fluctuates from play

to play, whereas Toller's is consistent, but there are several indications in Kaiser's work that he considers revolutionary violence to be morally justifiable.

Toller never allows his protagonists to use violence as a means to further a cause, despite his realistic attitude to the role of violence in revolutions, evident in his non-fictional writings. While working within the short-lived revolutionary Bavarian Soviet, Toller had admittedly warned the workers: "Seid vorsichtig gegen alle Redner, die zur Grausamkeit auffordern.

[...] Proletarierblut muß uns allezeit heilig sein."²¹

But this abhorrence of violence, reflected in Die Wandlung and Masse Mensch, is accompanied by a willingness to defend revolution against its enemies. In another official proclamation he announced: "Die Rote Armee ist im raschen Werden begriffen. Die Bewaffnung des Proletariats hat begonnen und wird in wenigen Tagen vollständig durchgeführt sein."²² In 1926 he concluded soberly: "Keine politische Revolution kann der Gewalt entraten."²³ The same letter, however, goes on to condemn the dangerous glorification of revolutionary violence:

Ich glaube, daß der sozialistische Revolutionär niemals Gewalt um ihrer selbst willen gebraucht. Er haßt sie, er verabscheut sie, und wenn er sie anwendet, empfindet er sie als furchtbares, tragisch notwendiges Mittel. [...] Es ist die Tugend der sozialistischen Revolution, großmütig und human zu sein. [...] Heute lacht man über Worte wie Menschlichkeit und Freiheit, nennt sie wehleidige, kleinbürgerliche Phrasen und erinnert sich nicht, daß sie 1918, nach 51 Monaten Krieg, unser Herz bewegt, unsere Vernunft erhellt haben. Heute glaubt man, besonders in Deutschland, es sei 'männlich', 'marxistisch', 'revolutionär', 'völkisch', Brutalität zu verteidigen und Kollektivverbrechen zu heroisieren.²⁴

It is this fear of glorified violence and the desire to infuse the socialist aims of his protagonists with

a deep sense of humanity that leads Toller to an absolute moral rejection of violence in his drama.

1. The Moral and Pragmatic Rejection of Violence in Toller's Work.

Toller's preoccupation with the problem of revolutionary violence first emerges in Die Wandlung, in the conflict between Friedrich and the Kommis. The Kommis believes - as did Toller himself²⁵ - in the power of literature as a means to influence and mobilise people: "Verse und Pamphlete will ich euch dazu schreiben..." (GW II, p. 49), but this propaganda is a call to violent revolution: "Meine Zeitschriften sollen euch begleiten mit schmetternden Trompetenklängen! Blut fließt! Blut der Freiheit!" (p. 49). By contrast, the socialist literature the Man in Grey (of Die Koralle) has been involved with, is not a call to arms - it merely attempts to persuade. His newspapers are weapons in themselves, and have not had any real results:

Sozialistische Zeitungen, Zeitschriften, Broschüren - das ganze Arsenal des kämpfenden Proletariats. Aufrufe - Anpreisungen von Mitteln, die den Erfolg verheißen - Tarife - Tabellen - Statistik: eine Sintflut von Literatur. Literatur - weiter nichts. Es bringt keinen Schritt weiter - die Kluft klafft immer nur breiter, denn auf die Feindschaft bis aufs Messer ist es aufgebaut. (Werke I, pp. 660-661).

The Man in Grey's approach is similar to Friedrich's: both believe, rather naively, that the rich can be defeated through education, rather than by class conflict.²⁶

The position of the Woman in Masse Mensch is less naive, in that the persuasive approach is combined with the recognition of the necessity of conflict. However, the chief weapon the Woman advocates is strike,

i.e. a peaceful route to change,²⁷ and she does so because violence, as an intrinsic part of the old order, cannot bring about real change. While the Nameless One believes that the means justify the end, the Woman insists that the means shape the end: "Zerbrecht die Fundamente des Unrechts, / Zerbrecht die Ketten der geheimen Knechtschaft, / Doch zerschellt die Waffen der verwesten Zeit." (GW II, p. 97). This position is of course no significant departure from that of Friedrich, who wants revolution to be devoid of vengeance. The ideas of the Nameless One only reflect the Great War propaganda of the old order - "Bedenken Sie: ein einziger blutiger Kampf / Und ewig Frieden." (GW II, p. 86).

In Die Maschinenstürmer, violence is directed against the weaving machines which replace the weavers' jobs extremely cost-effectively. Luddism is presented not so much as morally wrong, but as politically short-sighted. The 'deed' which the Nameless One wants, is demanded by John Wible here, who is a psychologically much more complex character, and whose betrayal of Jimmy is motivated by personal jealousy. "Es wäre eine Tat! Es wäre eine Aktion!" (GW II, p. 148) is how Wible defends the intended machine-wrecking.²⁸ But Ure also sees positive long-term gains arising from the threatened violence, and cynically longs for it: "In einer Zeit wie der gegenwärtigen könnte der Tatbestand einer Maschinenzerstörung unsere Position festigen." (p. 146). The fact that these words are spoken to Wible further discredits the latter, for he does not understand, or prefers to ignore, their implications.

The pragmatic rejection of violence, a principle which grows in stature in Die Maschinenstürmer, finally

replaces the emotional intensity of Masse Mensch in Hoppla, wir leben! Karl Thomas is a misguided, but generally sympathetic figure, whose heart is in the right place,²⁹ but who has not matured politically. Like Wible and the Nameless One, Thomas wants action, a 'deed' which will fire the imagination of the proletariat and spark off real revolution. His impulsiveness is criticised by both Wilhelm Kilman and Albert Kroll alike, although worlds now separate these former comrades. Kilman pays lip-service to the idea of the peaceful transition of society:

Ach, ihr seht nur immer den bewaffneten Kampf, hauen, stechen, schießen. Auf die Barrikaden! Auf die Barrikaden, du Arbeitervolk! Wir lehnen den Kampf roher Gewalt ab. Wir haben unermüdlich gepredigt, daß wir mit sittlichen, mit geistigen Waffen siegen wollen. Gewalt ist immer reaktionär. (GW III, p. 41).

Kroll also derides Thomas' desire for 'action' and sees in it both self-importance and cowardice: "Du möchtest, daß um deinetwillen die Welt ein ewiges Feuerwerk sei, mit Raketen und Leuchtkugeln und Schlachtengetöse. Du bist der Feigling, nicht ich." (p. 67).

Karl Thomas has not learnt to distinguish between the active collaboration with the system which Kilman has pursued (and which had always been on the cards, even in the Prologue), and the patient commitment of Kroll and Eva Berg. The political immaturity of assassination is further exposed by Toller's portrayal of the Nazi Student who eventually does kill Kilman, and who, by his own admission, understands so little about politics. (GW III, p. 76). The Student's language is, in fact, very similar to that of Karl Thomas; the former also longs for a deed: "Es geht mir gegen

das Gefühl, auf die Tat zu warten." (p. 76). Slightly earlier Thomas had said: "Geschehen muß was. Einer muß ein Beispiel geben." (p. 66).

However, as only gratuitous, vengeful, and ultimately ineffective violence is rejected,³⁰ this does imply that revolutionary violence, while not morally desirable, is at least unavoidable, which corresponds to the position stated in Quer Durch (see quotation no. 24 above). In Masse Mensch even the revolutionary violence undertaken by many is vengeance: "Rache ist nicht Wille zur Umgestaltung..." (GW II, p. 97). We have seen that the violence in Die Maschinenstürmer, like Kilman's assassination, is politically unproductive, and is therefore to be rejected. But does this mean that politically productive violence is seen as justifiable in this play? Rosemarie Altenhofer believes that Jimmy Cobbett accepts the idea of tactical revolutionary violence;³¹ this idea, however, is not borne out by Die Maschinenstürmer. While it is true that Jimmy is not torn apart by the violence question as the Woman is, his only explicit statements on violence are rejections thereof, and refer to the weavers' plans to destroy the machine. Otherwise Jimmy sees the creation of a single (inter)national union of workers as the key to working-class liberation: the "Weltgemeinschaft allen Werkvolks" will lead, he predicts, to a "Menschheitsbund der freien Völker". (GW II, p. 187). Whether or not Jimmy believes violence will become necessary en route to this new society is never actually directly addressed; though he speaks of "Kampf" (GW II, p. 144) this need not necessarily mean armed struggle. His advocacy of a single union certainly shows that he believes in initially peaceful measures, and as such his plans are related to the Woman's idea of a general strike. Kilman's assertion that violence

is "always reactionary" may correspond to the Woman's position, but Kilman is a figure who is clearly criticised by Toller,³² for in the same discussion he says: "Als Minister vertrete ich nicht eine Partei, sondern den Staat," (GW III, p. 40) and: "Es gehört mitunter Mut dazu, gegen das Volk zu regieren." (p. 40). Although he professes to believe in education (p. 42) in order to raise the worker's consciousness, previous and following scenes, in which he is shown collaborating with the old order (pp. 36-38 and pp. 93-94), or organising the repression of grass-roots political activity (pp. 28-29), show Kilman as an opportunist who has used the ideals of the revolution to further his own career.

Kroll's opposition to violence is purely pragmatic. Although he is fully aware that the elections are rigged, they are nevertheless "Sprungbrett zu Taten." (GW III, p. 70). The deed itself is not wrong, but it must be undertaken when the time is right.³³ Kroll neither explicitly endorses nor rejects revolutionary violence, but he does say, when Thomas asks him why he appears to be holding back the revolution: "Weil ich mit Volldampf fahren will, wenns Zeit ist." (p. 73). Kilman's death does in fact make a martyr of him, and therefore confirms the patient tactics of Kroll, Mutter Meller and Eva Berg.

Just as revolutionary violence is accepted by Kroll by implication only, the violence question is never fully addressed by Alwin Köbis and his fellow dissenting sailors in Feuer aus den Kesseln. However, Köbis does see the first step towards improved conditions in the navy in the form of a peaceful short strike by the entire fleet. Although the high treason of which Köbis, Reichpietsch, Sachse, Weber and Beckers

are accused had not actually been intended, Köbis comes to regret the fact - during the course of the farcical hearings and trial - that their revolt had not grown into revolution: "Wir waren ja zu dumm und zu feige, um das zu tun, was die Anklage uns vorwirft! Heute bereue ich es." (GW III, p. 169). Köbis, who, like Kroll, personifies the growth of revolutionary consciousness, only implies that violence must form an intrinsic part of revolution: "Wir müssen der Anarchie von oben die Ordnung von unten entgegensetzen." (p. 169). As Toller has shifted the dramatic conflict from between the workers to between the classes, the moral question of violence has lessened in importance considerably.

We may infer that Köbis is capable of justifying violence from two things: first, there is the contrasting position of Reichpietsch, a fundamentalist Christian, whose heart is basically in the right place, but who is portrayed as politically immature. Reichpietsch opposes the war because it violates the Fifth Commandment: "Es gibt nur eine Partei im Reichstag, die nach Gottes Wort handelt: Du sollst nicht töten. Das ist die Opposition." (GW III, p. 148). Second, there are the questions of solidarity and revolutionary commitment, which are more important to Köbis than that of revolutionary violence. As the moral problem of violence diminishes in stature in Toller's plays, the importance of proletarian solidarity grows. Jimmy's pragmatic rejection of violence in Die Maschinenstürmer is accompanied by his demand for patient³⁴ agitatory activity: this idea is elaborated upon - without the Expressionist pathos - in Hoppla!. Toller would appear to believe that if revolution were to be carried out with mass consensus, then surely excessive bloodshed could be avoided. Even though the rebellious sailors have the

support of the crews of seven ships, Köbis remarks: "Wir wollen uns darüber klar sein, wir haben zu früh losgeschlagen." (GW III, p. 150). The only truly violent agitator in the mould of the Nameless One is Birgiwski - "Die von Achtern sollen wir hängen und dann die Potts in die Luft sprengen!" (p. 149) - who is hardly taken seriously,³⁵ and in any case turns out to be an agent provocateur. Senseless violence is rejected quite directly in Die Maschinenstürmer, Hoppla, wir leben! and Feuer aus den Kesseln. Toller remains true to his protagonist in Masse Mensch to a certain extent however, in that he cannot bring himself to an explicit endorsement of truly revolutionary violence in these plays. Toller avoids justifying such violence no doubt out of a fear of being misunderstood: if his protagonists were to expound a positive attitude toward violence, an audience may be tempted to assume Toller were advocating morally justifiable violence. That this was never the case, is clear from the position explained in Quer Durch (see quotations nos. 23 and 24 above). Toller clearly felt that the original ethical idea which fuels a revolution would become compromised by violence. In order to ensure that this idea remained visible, Toller chose to avoid direct expression of necessary but morally abhorrent violence in his plays, and decided to allude to it by implication only. However, the moral rejection of violence is superseded in Toller's work by a plea for proletarian solidarity, which, if successful, would render violence minimal. This of course brings us back to the problem of the conservative masses. The answer, believes a hopeful Toller, is unremitting and extremely patient grass-roots political activity.

2. Kaiser's Fluctuating View of Revolutionary Violence.

Kaiser's characters are not as consistent in their attitudes to revolutionary violence as those described above. An explicit act of violence transforms society in Hölle Weg Erde (1919); Spazierer decides to assault the Jeweller physically because reasoning would bear no fruit: "Der Juwelier wird in seinem Laden nicht mit sich reden lassen - ihm sind die Fähigkeiten für eine Aufnahme meiner Darlegungen gelähmt. Der Versuch wäre zum Scheitern verurteilt." (Werke II, p. 109). Thus Spazierer's attack becomes an act for the common good, and as such is morally justifiable: "[...] ich muß noch Vorkehrungen treffen -- die allen dienen!..." (Werke II, p. 110). By contrast, Judith's violent behaviour in Die jüdische Witwe is designed to liberate only herself; it is instinctive and spontaneous. She kills Manasse and Holofernes because they are representatives of a repressive order, in which male sexuality is justified by a law requiring women to have children. Judith lashes out in protest against both the senile impotence of Manasse and the insensitive brutishness of Holofernes, but this violence, while prompted by social conditions, is not justified by a long-term revolutionary vision like that of Spazierer. However, Judith's killing of Holofernes is celebrated by society. Thus her violence, like Spazierer's, is morally relative, for even if it is not politically motivated, it is understood by everybody else to be so. The irony of this 'moral' killing is further heightened by the fact that Judith's story has biblical origins, as Ingrid Schuster points out:

Der Widerspruch zwischen dem biblischen Gebot 'Du sollst nicht töten!' und der 'Moral' der biblischen Erzählung von Judith liegt auf der Hand; die vielen Religionskriege

im Lauf der Geschichte haben die Absurdität, aber auch die Lebensfähigkeit dieses Paradoxes zur Genüge bewiesen.³⁶

In Die Koralie the newly regenerated Billionaire's Son cannot shoot his father. This is not because he feels the act would be politically fruitless, but because the emotional barriers are simply too great: "Hätte ich vergessen können, daß da oben mein Vater stand -". (Werke I, p. 686). Karl Thomas comes to realise that shooting Kilman would not have the desired effect; his language becomes devoid of the emotional intensity which had coloured it in previous scenes: "Es lohnt sich nicht. Du wirst mir grenzenlos gleichgültig." (GW III, p. 94). In Toller's original version of Hoppla, wir leben!, Thomas ends up understanding his old comrades in the final scene, set once again in the asylum.

The Billionaire's Son also becomes cooler and more clear-headed by declining to kill his father: "Es macht die Aufgabe lohnend. [...] Die furchtbare Begierde zu unterdrücken - und neben dem niedrigsten deiner Arbeiter auszuharren!" (Werke I, p. 687). Both the Billionaire's Son and Thomas want to kill a politically oppressive figure; both had been personally associated with those figures; both become more patient and rational men with long-term visions. (The vision of the Billionaire's Son is subsequently partially achieved in Gas). Their motivations and the effects of their rejection of murder are similar, the only difference lies in the reasons behind their immediate decision not to pull the trigger. But as Hölle Weg Erde was written two years later, it is impossible to speak of the rejection of violence directed at individuals as a consistent principle of Kaiser's drama. The Jeweller is portrayed as being more

representative of the ills which afflict everyone in society;³⁷ he is even less of an individual than the Billionaire, who is given considerable psychological depth, despite his lack of an individual name. In any case, the Billionaire's Son goes on in Gas to propagate a different sort of revolutionary violence: the idea of coercing the reactionary masses into adopting his scheme for change.

"Dann muß ich euch alle zwingen!" (Werke II, p. 27) is how the Billionaire's Son reacts to the Engineer's rejection of his anti-industrial plans. The Billionaire's Son acts undemocratically in the strictest sense of the word. He tries reasoning at first, clearly counting on the Engineer's skilful help: "Ja, mit Ihrer Hilfe rechne ich stark. Sie sind wie kein zweiter fähig, ein großes Projekt zu bewältigen. Zu Ihnen habe ich das beste Vertrauen!" (Werke II, p. 26). In fact, the help of the Engineer is doubly important to the Billionaire's Son: not only does he require his technical skills, but his collaboration would prevent the striking workers from rebuilding the plant. Thus the Engineer's refusal to participate in work which he considers below his station opens the floodgates for the conditioned masses. "Nein! - Das bringt die andern zurück. Der Weg ist frei - und sie stürmen herein - und bauen ihre Hölle wieder auf - und das Fieber wütet weiter!" (Werke II, p. 27). The proposed collaboration of the Engineer then, is already a form of coercion.

The force the Billionaire's Son intends to employ is of course well-intentioned, protective and paternalistic. At the end of the Fourth Act his determined "Dann muß ich euch alle zwingen!" has become: "Ich habe den Menschen gesehen -- ich muß ihn vor sich selbst schützen!" (Werke II, p. 51). By requisitioning military

protection, the Billionaire's Son prevents the workers from entering the gas works site, but as the state apparatus is fundamentally opposed to his anarchistic ideas, this final means of preventing the reconstruction of the plant is short-lived. While this paternalistic coercion has at its root the Billionaire's Son's faith and hope in mankind, the Billionaire Worker brings about the apocalypse because he feels justified in giving up revolutionary ideals: "Ich bin gerechtfertigt!! Ich kann vollenden!!" (Werke II, p. 88). Thus this ultimate violent act is morally justified because the masses have been given their chance and have failed to seize it. Annihilation is preferable to pointless existence - a decision made solely by the Billionaire Worker. Kaiser here adopts the despair of the Sick Man in Die Wandlung, who advocates mass suicide: "Um die Menschheit zu lehren, daß das wahre Heilmittel für sie allgemeiner Selbstmord ist. Ich habe eingesehen, durch die Liebe erreiche ich es nicht." (GW II. p. 56). However, Toller feels the Sick Man's nihilism can be overcome; in Gas II Kaiser endorses it. The Billionaire Worker is not sick: he is the only sane one in a world gone mad.

The underlying arrogance behind the Billionaire's Son's coercive measures is criticised by Kaiser in Gats. Here the doubts the Settlers express - discussed in Chapter I - are met by the Captain with blackmail, pure and simple: "Ich nehme meinen Besitz wieder an mich - und vertreibe euch aus meinen Baracken - in Not und Tod eurer Heimat ---- wenn ihr euch meinem Gebot widersetzt. Gehorcht -- oder brecht auf!!!!" (Werke II, p. 441). The masses react violently to the Captain's intentions, and the entire revolutionary organisation that is the "Weltsiedlungsunion" disintegrates. Use of the sterility drug gats itself is violent,

because it destroys potential life. In Gas, the Billionaire's Son's coercive methods are viewed with more understanding because his revolutionary aims enjoy Kaiser's approval. Violence, then, is justifiable as long as the ends are worthwhile. This is precisely what the Woman in Masse Mensch cannot accept. Her ideals are as isolated as the Billionaire's Son's are, but while he attempts to force them through, she is unable to compromise her moral position, and becomes a martyr to her cause.

In Die Lederköpfe, brutal violence is met with equal violence. As already mentioned in Chapter I, the play takes on a revolutionary tone when the Field Commander, filled with genuine shame and disgust at his self-inflicted mutilation, agrees to engineer Basileus' downfall. Although the Daughter promises the Field Commander her love, he is won over to revolutionary change by a sense of social responsibility, rather than by her sexual promises, which repel him: "Es jagt mich weiter von dir weg - was du mir anbietest!" (Werke III, p. 45). The Daughter encourages this social spirit in him; she believes killing Basileus would be a socially useful act, a deed which would restore beauty to his inhuman features: "Mit neuer Bildung dringt [das Gesicht] durch - es strahlt von Licht. In Blendung schließe ich die Augen - und sehe dich: wie du die Macht zerschlägst, die mit Zerstörung herrscht!" (Werke III, p. 45). The power which maintains itself by violence and destruction must be violently crushed. Kaiser adds to this the idea of self-sacrifice; the Field Commander invites Basileus to kill him, as the leather mask is a symbol of bloodthirsty tyranny: "[...] vernichte des Menschen Fratze, die ich auf meinen Schultern trage -- um dich zu vernichten!!!!" (Werke III, p. 56). Basileus is subsequently killed by the dissenting troops who, in the First Act, had

been unable to overcome their fear of the tyrant in order to carry through their spontaneous mutiny successfully. The Daughter, wrapped in revolutionary red, proclaims the beginning of a new era: "Mit den Gefangenen in die Wüste, um aufzubaun, was in Zerstörung liegt!!!!" (Werke III, p. 57).

Rebellion and revolution are identical in Die Lederköpfe; the soldiers are easily won over to the mutinous cause. There are no collaborators with the regime, save the City Commander - who falls victim to the brutality of Basileus himself - and - for a short time - the Field Commander, who changes. Thus violence is justifiable because only the vicious tyrant himself blocks the road to change. The masses - in the form of the oppressed troops and their families - are united and mobilised as one by the Field Commander. The Daughter successfully carries out the ideal of the Nameless One: one final act destroys violence altogether, but only because the system is, in the final analysis, upheld by an individual who has even succeeded in alienating his own troops, which would normally be his instrument of repression.

One of the most vociferous advocates of revolutionary violence in Kaiser's work is Noel Kehoe, who, ironically, is simultaneously one of the few characters who finally rejects the principle on moral grounds. Kehoe is initially prepared to go to any lengths necessary to ensure that 'God's wrath', i.e. the destruction of New Orleans, is seen through to the end. Although Kehoe later rejects the idea of 'God's revolution', it is the unsympathetically portrayed Doris who first derides the idea. Her view of God is similar to the Woman's; both see God as man's justification of his own violence, and must be condemned as such: "[...]"

so soll die Flut mir den letzten Fluch aus dem Munde spülen - auf diesen Gott, der Menschen mordet, um Menschen zu retten." (Doris: Werke II, p. 665). "Gott ist schuldig! [...] Gott / Vor ein Gericht! Ich klage an." (Woman: GW II, pp. 102-103). The General describes Kehoe's band as passive revolutionaries; unlike party-political socialists, they are unwilling to use violence to further their means: "Weiße Revolutionäre, wenn ich sie so nennen soll - im Gegensatz zu den roten, die mit Gewalt den Umsturz herbeiführen wollen." (Werke II, p. 689). Yet the only really passive element in Kehoe's revolution is the refusal to conform to materialism, to the idea of production for anything more than the most basic needs, as Stimson points out. (Werke II, p. 687). The General too, concedes that Kehoe's decision to strengthen the dam is in itself an act of violence: "Sind nicht diese weißen Revolutionäre auch zu Tötlichkeiten übergegangen, indem sie eine ganze Stadt mit Hunderttausenden von Menschenleben mit Untergang bedrohten? [...] Das ist doch Gewalt, die angewendet wird." (Werke II, p. 690). Kehoe is prepared to go further; he is willing to kill ^aman, in order to prevent the dam from being blown up. Kehoe is prevented by force from carrying out his act of sabotage, but he repents on moral grounds anyway; pacifist respect for nonviolence becomes more important than revolution.

3. Violence Turned Inward: Self-Sacrifice and Martyrdom.

Kehoe, in repenting, adopts the position of the Woman. However, there is always an element of hope attached to the martyrdom of Toller's heroes: the Woman's death has a positive effect on the other prisoners; Jimmy's death changes his comrades; Köbis' prediction that the sailors will not die in vain is proved correct

in the final scene of Feuer aus den Kesseln. The pacifism of Kehoe is a form of resignation, as he gains personal satisfaction from it, a feeling of having rid himself of guilt, but does not hope to influence or change anything through his death. It is also important to recognise that Kehoe is initially forced to renounce violence. Kenworthy contrasts the hero of Mississippi with the Captain, claiming that the former "rises above the false idea that had possessed him",³⁸ but it is not until he himself is shot that Kehoe drops his gun.

The self-sacrifice of Doris parallels similar acts in many other Kaiser plays. While Eustache's voluntary death is intended to affect his fellow citizens, an aim which is indeed fulfilled, Doris' decision to remain with Kehoe is entirely private. Kehoe may adopt the non-violent principles of the Woman, but Eustache's suicide is in fact closer to the Woman's death in terms of the social repercussions which follow. All these figures who choose death have one thing in common though: an altruistic lack of self-concern. They consider moral principles to be of greater value than their own lives. This idea occurs again and again in Kaiser's work: in Juana (1918) for example, the heroine prefers to die rather than see her two lovers destroy each other and their friendship; in Das Frauenopfer (1915-16) both Lavalette and the old general Excelman are changed by the Countess' completely devoted selflessness; in Der Brand im Opernhaus (1918) the self-sacrifice of Sylvette contrasts vividly with the background of a corrupt, amoral society.

The Social Standing of the Revolutionary.

1. The Disaffected Intellectual.

If we look more closely at these revolutionaries in Toller's and in Kaiser's work, we can see how these differences or similarities in attitude towards the problem of revolutionary violence arise.

The first two Toller protagonists, Friedrich and the Woman, are not revolutionaries from the ranks of the oppressed. Like Toller himself, they are disaffected members of the bourgeoisie, who have become revolutionaries out of intellectual and moral choice, rather than material deprivation. A comparable figure in Kaiser's work is Spazierer, who is suddenly given the responsibility of saving a life, a mission which soon takes on far greater dimensions. Like Friedrich and the Woman, Spazierer is neither unduly oppressed, nor is he in a position of power. Like Friedrich, he becomes a visionary leader for the masses, which are receptive to change in both these utopian plays. But both Spazierer and Friedrich reject the conventional notion of leadership: "Wo ist der Führer?!" (Werke II, p. 142), the reborn crowds cry in Hölle Weg Erde, and Spazierer, underlining the radical and new nature of society, replies: "In Schöpfung in euch, die ihr baut!" (Werke II, p. 142), Friedrich is also called upon: "Du sei uns Führer," (GW II, p. 51), but he prefers to be seen as one of many: "Mitsammen wollen wir schreiten!" (GW II, p. 51). Friedrich and Spazierer are inspired catalysts, who allow regeneration to take place under its own impetus, once they have begun the process. They are both artists who succeed in pulling the rest of society up to their superior moral level.³⁹ In Masse Mensch

the dramatic conflict is heightened by the presence of the Nameless One, but the Woman's social position is identical to that of Friedrich, which fuels the divisive, destructive arguments of the Nameless One.

However, despite their similar backgrounds, Spazierer on the one hand and Friedrich and the Woman on the other diverge on the question of violence. Spazierer is easily able to transcend the moral qualms of the two Toller protagonists and employ violence. Friedrich and the Woman are up against the short-sighted and bitter political anger of the masses, who are mobilised and demand revolution, but who are in danger of betraying the very humanity of that revolution. The masses in Hölle Weg Erde are not so much oppressed, but are themselves oppressors, through their apathy and lack of community spirit. Spazierer's attack on the Jeweller is an attack on apathy - the Woman and Friedrich have a different task: they must imbue the newly awakened masses with a sense of love, and persuade them to keep their heads in their revolutionary zeal.

2. Revolutionaries-From-Above and -From-Below.

Toller's revolutionaries become proletarian in Die Maschinenstürmer. The only 'intellectual' figure is Lord Byron, who appears solely in the Prologue. Byron is sympathetic to the worker's cause, but he is no revolutionary; he attempts to persuade other peers from within the parliamentary system, and is derided by the other Lords as a sentimental artist:

Er sprach wie ein Poet, nicht wie ein Staatsmann.
Poeten können Dramen schreiben, Verse dichten,
Doch Politik ist Handwerk harter Männer.
(GW II, p. 121).

Although Byron is trapped firmly within the liberal bourgeois democratic system, he is the closest figure in Toller's work to a common character in Kaiser's work: the revolutionary-from-above.

Many of Kaiser's revolutionaries, as spiritual giants, tend to occupy a privileged position in society, which they either reject, or consider to be of little importance. Eustache de Saint-Pierre is not only an elected burgher, and as such a decision-maker, he is also the richest man in Calais. (Werke I, p. 538). The Billionaire's Son's privileged position is implicit in his name, and the Captain is also blessed with material wealth. As we have seen, Eustache does not need to force anyone to follow his beliefs: he acquires disciples through argument and persuasion and finally convinces the remaining sceptics through an exemplary act of self-sacrifice, but his privileged position means he is listened to in the first place.

The Field Commander is also a revolutionary-from-above; the troops he leads into Basileus' court are filled with confidence in their insurrection, now that the former military supremo has acquired a social conscience. In the First Act the soldiers are incapable of facing up to the might of Basileus, even though that might depends entirely on their subservience. However, as already demonstrated, the masses are kept in line by ingrained fear, which in turn is maintained by gratuitous brutality. It takes a revolutionary-from-above to help the oppressed cross the barrier of fear, although the Field Commander exploits and organises a mutinous feeling among the masses.⁴⁰

Two of the other privileged revolutionaries are in quite a different situation. The masses are unable

to grasp the long-term advantages offered to them, and so must be forced into accepting them. The Billionaire's Son is forced to use the repressive measures once employed by his father, to quite different ends. The Captain also resorts to force. The Billionaire Worker is not a revolutionary-from-above in the conventional sense, as his privileged position, as heir to the Billionaire's Son, has been stripped from him by a ruthless totalitarian regime. Thus the title 'Billionaire Worker' exists to describe the ancestral and spiritual heritage which give this figure slightly more individuality than the faceless rulers and masses. He is both a worker and more; as the guardian of the socialist-anarchist visions of his grandfather,⁴¹ he is a kind of dispossessed revolutionary-from-above, a position of which the ruling Blue Figures are well aware, as they initially attempt to harness his influence over the workers for their own destructive purposes. The Billionaire Worker, despite his considerable influence, lacks the power of the Captain or his grandfather, and is therefore unable to threaten or coerce the masses into following him; instead, when destructive power passes into his hands for a moment, he chooses to use it, deciding the masses have been given their chance and have failed to seize it. Despite his lack of conventional power, the Billionaire Worker is as undemocratic as the Billionaire's Son or the Captain; his decision to destroy a society unworthy of survival certainly has no popular base. The same is true of Kehoe, who also briefly - though far more indirectly - holds thousands of lives in his hands. Toller's revolutionaries never advocate such arrogant unpopular action - and are in any case never in a sufficiently powerful position to do so - even though the masses are often unable to grasp what is best for them. These

revolutionaries may lack mass backing, but they do not give up trying to acquire it.

It is important to realise that the privileged revolutionary has potential force at his disposal - he can threaten to use violence without actually ever using it. This is because the Billionaire's Son and the Captain have found it convenient not to relinquish all of their power, though they may claim to have rejected their positions. The Billionaire's Son, for example, tells his son-in-law that he is no more than a worker (Werke II, p. 15), but later claims to own the site of the plant: "Bin - ich - hier - nicht - Herr - meines Bodens?!" (Werke II, p. 55). The Woman not only becomes a martyr to her cause through moral choice, but because she would be unable to force her ideas through without broad-based support, as she lacks the power of the Billionaire's Son. The impotent revolutionary-from-below - in Kaiser's work a much less common figure than in Toller's - is either forced to resort to violent insurrection, doomed to failure, or at least to accepting the postponement of change. In any case, the coercive policies of the Billionaire's Son and the Captain are fruitless; the masses are able, ironically, in view of their inability to support successfully any progressive ideas, to rise above the power of the revolutionaries-from-above. In Gas the workers mobilise to reactionary ends, and unwittingly play into the hands of the ruling order, as the populace of Schellenkönig does. In Gats however, the anti-progressive mass movement which rises out of the collective rejection of the drug, is portrayed as positive. Whether they succeed or fail, Kaiser's revolutionaries-from-above are unlikely figures, because they are implicated in the very ideology they oppose. This is particularly obvious in Die Lederköpfe, as the Field Commander

is transformed from reactionary to revolutionary during the course of the play. He initially takes the violence of war to horrible lengths; he is Basileus' greatest ally until he turns against the dictator. Other revolutionaries-from-above are also part of the system they oppose: the Captain and the Billionaire's Son, as we have seen, hold substantial wealth and power, while Eustache, also a rich man, proclaims his gospel in the face of a war waged ultimately for profit.

Toller is more realistic about power and its corruptive influence on those who wield it. Köbis is the only one among the rebellious sailors who sees through the abuse of rights by those in power; to Sachse's question - "Woher nehmen sie das Recht?" - he answers: "Recht?... Macht!"⁴² (GW III, p. 173). The rich and powerful may be seen pityingly in Die Wandlung as "Arme, Verirrte", (GW II, p. 61), but in general all power is reactionary in Toller's work. Of Kaiser's plays only Mississippi and Der Silbersee conform fully to this idea. By the late 1920's Kaiser had abandoned the revolutionary-from-above, and figures of authority became less likely to be transformed by exemplary deeds or ideas. In Gilles und Jeanne (1922) the King tears his royal insignia off and stamps them underfoot, proclaiming: "Ich will Straßenkehrer werden!!!!" (Werke V, p. 811). Such dramatic ideological U-turns by powerful figures virtually disappear from Kaiser's post-Expressionist work.⁴³ In both Mississippi and Der Silbersee the ruling class is cynically aware of its elitist position, which it intends to maintain, while all revolutionary impulses come from below. In both plays man is portrayed neither as good nor as bad: evil is connected to the elite which controls the mass, while the representatives of the oppressed are purer, though beset by weaknesses, and less decadent. Of course Kehoe's long-term motives

are compromised in their purity by the moral conflict he is drawn into, but his renunciation of violence returns him to his morally pure self, even though it means his revolutionary aims are smashed. In Der Silbersee, Olim and Severin are not drawn into any conflict over revolutionary violence, so the dividing line between good and evil is more marked. Olim is given the chance to atone for his guilt when he is materially freed by his lottery win. He looks after the injured Severin, and eventually conquers his desire for revenge. Severin overcomes this desire independently however, as he recognises that he owes much to Olim. Ironically, it is because they overcome their weaknesses, that Olim and Severin are so easily exploited by von Luber. She and Baron Laur celebrate the - temporary - triumph of evil over good, and the re-establishment of the old order: "Die unten quetscht [das Rad der Zeit] breit / und oben thront die alte Herrlichkeit." (Werke III, pp. 280-281).

In Toller's plays rulers do not shed their power in order to become revolutionary visionaries; but he does envisage them shedding their ideals in order to acquire power. Kilman is able to reject violence and pay lip-service to peaceful progress, because he can 'take action' (GW III, p. 29) against Eva Berg with the support of the entire capitalist judicial apparatus. Kilman only occupies the position he does because he has expressly renounced revolution. The only comparable figure in Kaiser's work is the Man in Grey, who also makes the transition from revolutionary to member of the establishment. The Man in Grey is, however, a far more abstract figure than Kilman. The latter is a realistic character because his cowardly tendency to adapt himself to the dominant ideology is exposed in the Prologue of Hoppla!, whereas the

Man in Grey is a sincere socialist whose Weltanschauung is destroyed by the Billionaire. The corruptive influence of power is also in evidence in Der Präsident (1927). In this comedy, the chief figure, Blanchonnet, has sunk his entire fortune into a charitable organisation and has become its president, as he hopes his status will help his - wholly selfish - political ambitions. (Werke V, p. 489). Unlike Kilman, Blanchonnet already has considerable wealth at his disposal, whereas Kilman comes from a working-class background. Both, however, aim to exploit organisations originally designed to represent the oppressed in order to further their own political careers: Kilman purports to represent the workers, whereas Blanchonnet could not care less about the actual aims of the "Internationaler Kampfbund gegen die Mädchenhändler". Of course it must be noted that Kaiser's revolutionaries-from-above are exceptions: the Billionaire's Son is crushed by the rest of the ruling class, as well as by the masses, the Captain only has contact with the impoverished Settlers, and Eustache must convince his fellow burghers first and foremost of the value of his views. However, the concept of the revolutionary-from-above does show that Kaiser's sympathy for ideas of change were idealistically motivated, rather than informed by political reality. By the latter half of the Weimar era, Kaiser appears to have become less idealistic, as the revolutionary-from-above disappears from his work. In Mississippi and Der Silbersee this figure is replaced by revolutionaries-from-below. Ächtung des Kriegers on the one hand urges contemporary politicians to take potentially revolutionary steps, but simultaneously reflects, in Kellogos' surprise and confusion at Socrates' suggestions, that no such steps are likely to be taken from above.

As the dramatic conflict in Toller's plays arises most frequently out of the clash between workers, there are both positive and negative revolutionaries-from-below featured. Thus the Nameless One is a ruthless propagator of violent insurrection, while Jimmy Cobbett believes in peaceful transition to a new society, but both are proletarians. The revolutionary-from-below appears somewhat later in Kaiser's work than in Toller's, but they are usually positively portrayed figures. An exception in more ways than one is the Man in Grey, who is not only an earlier version of the revolutionary-from-below, but who renounces his socialism, and who in any case is eclipsed by the Billionaire's Son, who becomes the more important exponent of the revolutionary idea in Die Koralle. Further exceptions are the terrorists of Der Zar läßt sich photographieren (1927). Critics have virtually ignored the content of this short work; it is mentioned usually only in passing as an example of Kaiser's collaboration with Kurt Weill. Only Robert Kauf and Ernst Schürer look briefly at the actual meaning of Der Zar läßt sich photographieren. Kauf believes that the Tsar is portrayed sympathetically and that his would-be assassins are depicted as inhuman;⁴⁴ from this Kauf concludes that Kaiser tried to show, within the lighthearted framework of an opera buffa, that even an "absolute ruler, [...] who respects his fellow creatures as individuals, can tower ethically over republican revolutionaries who do not."⁴⁵ Schürer also maintains that the Tsar is a sympathetic character who does not visit the studio "in his official capacity but as a human being..."⁴⁶ The Tsar, however, is characterised as a childish, frivolous fool; Kauf is correct only in saying that the terrorists are depicted as inhuman. In fact, Kaiser's views, as demonstrated in Der Zar läßt sich photographieren,

are far from clear. On the one hand the Tsar appears to be a tyrannical, unjust ruler; there are many who suffer under his regime, not just a few:

Dort unter dem Tuch, dort unter dem schwarzen
Tuch lauert der Schuß, der das Signal zur
Befreiung gibt, der das Tor zur Freiheit
öffnen soll, der die letzten Fesseln unserer
Brüder löst, der den Tyrannen ins Herz trifft.
(Werke II, p. 586).

Although he is described as a "Herrscher von Gottes Gnaden" (Werke II, p. 580), the Tsar sees himself simply as a man, whose political decisions are the products of a whimsical mankind:

Ich will ein Bild von mir, das mich erinnert
an einen Menschen, der ich bin. Ich werde
es ansehen, wenn ich über Krieg und Frieden
bestimmen soll, und werde fragen: Warum
wollen das die Völker? Wäre ich Volk, mir
wären grüne Felder und wimmelnde Herden
lieber, oder am sprudelnden Bach die Angel
werfen nach schimmernden Fischen. Ich könnte
keinen Menschen töten. (Werke II, p. 589).

The fact that the attempt on the Tsar's life fails, must mean that Kaiser rejects such individual acts of violence. Kaiser has little sympathy with the immediate aims of the would-be assassins, although he appears to view their grievances as legitimate. However, the chief perpetrator of these grievances is portrayed sympathetically, while the terrorists are seen as inhuman, even though their ruthlessness is clearly the product of single-minded dedication to their cause. Of course it is true that in writing Der Zar läßt sich photographieren, Kaiser intended first and foremost to furnish Weill with an amusing libretto. In choosing the theme of political assassination as a mere backdrop however, Kaiser raises problems which he fails to address satisfactorily.

Olim and Severin do not have to confront the violence question, as Der Silbersee is dominated by the problem of mass solidarity. They overcome their weaknesses and only become propagators of a vague and distant revolution at the end of the play. To what extent this revolution is to be achieved by violent means, is not addressed. The only revolutionary-from-below in Kaiser's pre-1933 work who is forced to deal with the moral dilemma of violence is Noel Kehoe. The revolutionary-from-below who is confronted with the possibility of violence seems to be left with the following choices: either he renounces violence on moral grounds and consequently achieves no tangible gains, or he employs violence, but is crushed by a system which is more overwhelmingly powerful and deep-rooted than he could have imagined. Kehoe only renounces violence after the ruling order forcefully prevents him from using it; the Nameless One is similarly crushed by the state, though he does not reject violence. Yet several of Toller's violent revolutionaries are defeated by a positive, alternative example (Jimmy versus John Wible; Kroll versus Thomas). The Woman also gives an example, but her death is not seen to have the sweeping effect of Jimmy's. Two prisoners are changed by the Woman's martyrdom: "Schwester, warum tun wir das?" (GW II, p. 112) they ask each other, whereas Ned Lud, who at first carries out the cowardly Wible's demands for blood and kills Jimmy, recognises, along with the other weavers, the fallacy of his actions.

The gains the revolutionary-from-below achieves are small in Toller's plays, but they are nevertheless hopeful. The difference between the impact of the revolutionary-from-below in Toller's dramas and that

of Kehoe brings us to another major theme in the work of both writers: that of individual regeneration.

Individual Regeneration: Intermediary or Final Solution?

The regeneration of the individual is a common theme in the work of both Toller and Kaiser. With the exception of Die Wandlung, in which mass regeneration is viewed as possible, and is begun, Toller's early work falls back on the principle of regeneration of the individual after the failure of mass regeneration; the same may be said of Kaiser's early work. Kaiser often falls back on individual regeneration because his exceptional revolutionaries-from-above have been crushed by the existing old order; in Toller's early work a parallel process takes place - the regenerated individual is an exceptional figure as well, who is crushed by his misguided comrades. However, in Toller's work this retreat is only temporary, in that it retains a hope for the future, whereas Kaiser may portray the regeneration of the individual as an end in itself, in a world in which the masses are quite simply incapable of change.

There are many plays in Kaiser's work in which there are no mass scenes, but in which the idea of regeneration is central. The concentration on individuals helps to demonstrate the qualities which Kaiser considers necessary in the New Man (and Woman). Examples of this type of play, in which change is seen to emanate from the individual, are Friedrich und Anna, Claudius (both 1910-11) and Juana (all published as Drei Einakter in 1918), Das Frauenopfer and Der Brand im Opernhaus. It is not so much that Kaiser is not socially concerned, as some critics have suggested, but that for him, improvement of man's nature precedes social improvement.

Kaiser's social concern is evident in his social criticism - explicit in plays like Gas, Gats, Mississippi and Der Silbersee, implicit in Der Brand im Opernhaus, in which the moral dilemmas of Herr von *** and Sylvette are acted out within the framework of a frivolous society. The fact that people are affected by the exemplary behaviour of the characters in these plays shows that Kaiser believes their attributes to be the key to general improvement. Toller can also never quite give up the idea that social change must at least be paralleled by changes within people. In his earliest work this change within is of greater importance than external revolution, in that it is an essential prerequisite of social change. However, even in Hoppla, wir leben!, in which commitment to socialism becomes more important than moral dilemmas faced by the individual, we find that shifts in the individual's outlook continue to play a vital role: even Karl Thomas must modify his revolutionary ideas. This idea is briefly ignored in Feuer aus den Kesseln, but is taken up once again in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!'

Toller's most optimistic play is of course his debut, Die Wandlung. Friedrich, an inspired and radically renewed individual, succeeds in transforming others by appealing to an innate communal sense which they have forgotten; they rediscover the better, the true side of humanity and cry in unison: "Wir sind doch Menschen!" (GW II, p. 60). Thus although Friedrich, like Spazierer, dismisses the notion of leadership as part and parcel of the conventions he is rejecting, he is nevertheless an individual who gives rise to a new mass movement: Spazierer fulfils exactly the same task in Hölle Weg Erde. Eustache de Saint-Pierre also leaves behind an inspired and renewed mankind, though he must do more than argue the case for a change

in the hearts of men. He warns his comrades: "[Die Tat] fordert euch nackt und neu," (Werke I, p. 562) but they do not reach this state immediately, for they suspect him of betrayal from the very beginning (Werke I, p. 573), when he fails to arrive in the market square in the final act. Eustache's suicide is the final inspiration the others need - a deed to follow the words, a deed which prompts Eustache's father to proclaim the birth of the New Man. (Werke I, p. 577). The alternative social order in Gas is a direct consequence of the Billionaire's Son's renewal in Die Koralle. Setbacks begin to occur when the inspired individual begins to expect more than these initial hopeful signs of transformation among the masses. Thus the plays Die Wandlung and Die Bürger von Calais may end on a hopeful note, but do not go any further. Reconstruction is only hinted at, barely begun and certainly not completed.⁴⁷ The Billionaire's Son's hopes are only partially realised in that a limited material improvement has taken place by the time of Gas. Once doubts and conflicts begin to arise, the inspired individual is forced to retreat and either place his hopes in the future, or completely give up the hope of improvement for all.

The protagonists of Masse Mensch and Die Maschinenstürmer both work for an improved society, but achieve much less. To them, their individual regeneration is not important in itself, just as it is not to Eustache, Spazierer, Friedrich and the Billionaire's Son. The latter in particular shows a greater concern for the collective, for he denies his son-in-law any financial help. What does matter are the social effects their renewal is capable of having. Thus the Woman's insight into her guilt (incurred when compromising her ideals for the sake of her Husband and the vengeful masses)

brings about her final transformation. She rises above the fray, above the old loyalties to her Husband; she remains true to her pacifism by refusing to take advantage of the killing of a prison guard in order to escape. Her execution forces two other inmates to reconsider stealing the few possessions left behind in her cell. The reactions to Jimmy's death are more far-reaching: Ned Lud, one of Jimmy's misguided killers, ends up predicting the coming of more inspired individuals like Jimmy:

So sperrt uns ein! Wir wissen, was wir taten!
Und wollen sühnen, daß wir den erschlugen,
Andere werden kommen...
Wissender, gläubiger, mutiger, als wir.
Es wankt schon euer Reich, ihr Herren Englands!
(GW II, p. 189).

Michael Ossar stresses the emphasis Lud's prediction places on the individual, and compares it to Kaiser's views:

For if Ned Lud is brought by Jimmy's death to be tending toward Georg Kaiser's view of the essentially private nature of regeneration: the messianic pre-war drama Die Bürger von Calais [...] has given way to the mordant cynicism of Gas II.⁴⁸

Ossar is implying here that the ideas in Kaiser's work are constantly and consistently developed; this idea may be valid when applied to Toller's plays, but is hardly so when applied in strict fashion to those of Kaiser. Hölle Weg Erde, a work which effectively cancels out the "mordant cynicism" of Gas II, was written at about the same time as the final instalment of the Gas trilogy in 1919. As we saw in the Introduction (p. 11 above), Kaiser himself rejected the idea of such strict chronological development. While it is doubtless correct to say that there is no clear line of development from play to play in Kaiser's work,

a general line of progress is certainly evident, for the revolutionary-from-above is superseded by revolutionaries-from-below by the end of the Weimar era. This sort of general development however, visible only when several plays are considered, is not what Ossar is referring to: he believes Gas II to be Kaiser's final statement on regeneration. Quite apart from this, Ossar misses the social knock-on effect of 'private' regeneration. 'Private' regeneration implies that such internal change is an end in itself; we shall see that such regeneration does indeed exist within Kaiser's work, but it hardly applies to Ned Lud's vision. Lud's final words, "Es wankt schon euer Reich, ihr Herren Englands!" clearly show that this vision is one of a more just social order. In any case, there is a certain ambiguity in Lud's final speech. It is not quite clear from the words "Andere werden kommen..." whether he is referring to more messianic leader figures like Jimmy, or to a group of more class-conscious workers. The fact that Lud does not identify the 'others' of which he speaks with Jimmy, but instead contrasts them with all the weavers ("Wissender, gläubiger, mutiger, als wir", (my emphasis) would suggest that Lud is not thinking of isolated individuals, but rather of a newly enlightened collective.

Kaiser's Koralle ends with a glimmer of hope, embodied by the regenerated Billionaire's Son, despite the existential pessimism of the Billionaire, who describes mankind as: "Losgebrochene Stücke vom dämmernden Korallenbaum - mit einer Wunde vom ersten Tag an." (Werke I, p. 711). The Billionaire's Son's hopes in turn are shattered in Gas, but are revitalised when he asks his Daughter: "Sage es mir: wo ist der Mensch? Wann tritt er auf - und ruft sich mit Namen:- Mensch? Wann begreift er sich - und schüttelt aus dem Geäst sein Erkennen?"

(Werke II, pp. 57-58). The Daughter's promise - "Ich will ihn gebären!" (Werke II, p. 58) - hints at better things to come.

Toller's plays, with the exception of Hinkemann, and later 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' and Die blinde Göttin, remain hopeful, but become less dependent on the messianic individual. Hoppla, wir leben! and Feuer aus den Kesseln are realistic both in their style and in their appraisal of potential solutions to contemporary social problems. Toller succeeds in drawing positive conclusions from Hinkemann; he manages to achieve a sober commitment to socialism without succumbing to the despair evident in this work. Kaiser also continued to write plays with optimistic messages throughout the years of the Weimar Republic, but these works are balanced by others in which the idea of social regeneration continues to fail because of the intransigence of the masses. Gas II is sometimes seen as a watershed in Expressionist drama, but Kaiser recoils from this apocalyptic judgement on mankind and approaches the problems of social and individual regeneration freshly several more times before 1933. Thus, social revolution proceeds from the inspired leadership of a changed individual in Die Lederköpfe. The last play Kaiser wrote before his work was banned by the Nazis, Der Silbersee, also once again prophesies a changed world emanating from regenerated individuals. But in other plays the messianic individual is defeated and must accept that individual, private regeneration is the most he can hope for. Mrs. Brown may claim - in Der Präsident - that the individual is more effective than organisations or parties in the battles against social injustice: "Die wenigen schaffen das meiste - glauben Sie mir, es hat noch kein so vielköpfiger Bund einen Sperling vom Dach geschrien. Aber der einzelne trifft mit

kerzengerader Flinte." (Werke V, p. 479). However, this statement is not only not borne out by much of Kaiser's work during the Weimar years, but Mrs. Brown and her partner-in-crime Ravanini turn out to be cynical international hotel thieves, rather than the anti-bureaucratic vigilantes and philanthropists Elmire thinks they are. Some of Kaiser's individual regenerates of the late Twenties come to the same conclusion as the Billionaire in Die Koralle: "Aber die tiefste Wahrheit wird nicht von Ihnen und den Tausenden Ihresgleichen verkündet - die findet immer nur ein einzelner. Dann ist sie so ungeheuer, daß sie ohnmächtig zu jeder Wirkung wird!" (Werke I, p. 710). These words are pronounced by a character who never has any faith or interest whatever in social regeneration, but they foreshadow the failures of the Captain and Noel Kehoe, both socially motivated revolutionaries. The Captain and Kehoe do not fare much better than Kaiser's earliest utterly disappointed regenerate, the Cashier of Von morgens bis mitternachts. But while the Cashier races blindly from scene to scene, trying to buy what he believes modern society has to offer, the Captain and Kehoe have clear revolutionary visions. In Gats and Mississippi society is as uncomprehending as in Schellenkönig and Gas, but never again ^{in his drama} does Kaiser angrily judge mankind as he had in Gas II.

In both Gats and Mississippi social regeneration is presented as a false and empty hope, one which is bound to lead to disappointment. The Male Secretary's faith in the triumph of the individual initially shocks the Woman Secretary, who is filled with admiration for the socialist ideal of the Captain, and for whom the general well-being of mankind is far more important than that of the individual: "Es ist beim Kapitän kein anderer Gedanken als aller - es ist bei den Kontrollern

kein anderer Gedanken als aller - es ist bei allen Siedlern kein anderer Gedanken als aller -- ..." (Werke II, pp. 426-427). The Male Secretary cannot accept this mass idealism, but the 'triumph' of the individual of which he speaks smacks of resignation; to the Woman Secretary's astonished question - "Mit dieser Überzeugung können Sie atmen??" (Werke II, p. 427) - he can only reply: "Ich atme." In other words, being alive is all that counts - social ideals are ultimately destined to fail. The Male Secretary's prediction that the Woman Secretary will come round to his way of thinking is fulfilled, and also precludes the resigned conclusions Noel Kehoe is forced to draw. The anger the Captain's advocacy of gats arouses in the masses at large and finally in the Woman Secretary, previously his staunchest ally - shows that Kaiser doubts that people are unwilling to make great sacrifices for the common good. The views represented by the two Secretaries at the outset of the play illustrate a dichotomy within Kaiser himself, which in this case is decided in favour of the individual. The Captain's social vision is flawed (as is Kehoe's), so Kaiser can more easily reject the idea of mass regeneration. The fact that these visions are flawed, shows a certain diminishing faith in the idea of social improvement in Kaiser's work after Gas II. Kenworthy believes Kaiser feels emotionally with the Captain's ideals, but is forced to condemn him intellectually,⁴⁹ because the Captain's vision fails to take account compassionately of human desires, i.e. the desire to reproduce. The whole problem could be phrased differently though: Kaiser intellectually approves of the social vision - the problem of overpopulation is acute, which nobody in the play doubts, and ought to be dealt with - but because it is flawed - by an emotive problem - he must reject it on emotional grounds. The dichotomy within Kaiser himself is this: he idealistically

longs for general improvement, but is constantly disappointed by people generally; while he may claim that he is defending humanity - "Ich habe die Partei des Menschen ergriffen," (Werke IV, p. 630) - such statements are often balanced by others which reflect his bitterness: "Der Mensch hat nur einen wirklich gemeinen Feind: den Menschen." (Werke IV, p. 630).

Kehoe's vision is flawed as it involves violence against others, even though he sees God's Commandments as the ideal base for all secular laws. (Werke II, p. 683). He sees through his own disregard for the Commandments, and his presumptuous assumption that he is 'God's weapon' in the final scene, when, mortally wounded, he lies waiting for the floods with his newly-reconciled former wife:

So wird es mir deutlich gemacht. Ich erhob mich zum Richter und Rächer, der das Erbarmen verachtete. Des Menschen Zorn reicht nicht an Gottes Zorn. Er wird zum Missetäter, wenn er mit seinen Mitteln nach Vergeltung trachtet. Ich hatte es unternommen - es war zum Mißlingen bestimmt. (Werke II, p. 699).

Kenworthy maintains that Kaiser reaffirms his belief in regeneration emanating from the individual in Mississippi, while "indicating faults in the social fabric."⁵⁰ These "faults" are the central concern of Kehoe's band, whose aims, as we have seen, are entirely secular. In addition, the regeneration of Kehoe and Doris has become entirely private - it has very little effect on any others, although Stimson, who allows Kehoe and Doris to face death together, remarks: "Weil es manchmal nicht wichtig ist zu leben - sondern wichtiger, wie man stirbt. --" (Werke II, p. 698). However, Stimson and the General then simply drive away; though there may be an element of understanding in Stimson's

remark, there is no question of the powers-that-be changing their position. While Kehoe's rejection of violence and his reconciliation with Doris is intended to affect an audience, there is little question of regeneration "emanating" from individuals to affect others. What has become important is the love Doris has found once again for Kehoe: "Jetzt liebe ich dich, Noel. Jetzt küsse ich deine Lumpen. Jetzt bin ich bei dir. So liegen wir zuletzt beieinander - dürftig und groß wie der Tod." (Werke II, p. 700). Kehoe had always been materially humble; at the end of the play he acquires an unassuming spiritual modesty as well.⁵¹

Kaiser thus oscillates between optimism and pessimism during these years. His pessimistic works often appear more convincing, as the message of social optimism in Die Lederköpfe is not significantly less naive than that of Die Bürger von Calais or even Toller's Wandlung. However, it would be unfair to say Kaiser does not develop ideologically during this period: after Die Lederköpfe the revolutionary-from-above disappears from his work. Mississippi may conclude that both the enemies and the moral dilemmas of revolution are insurmountable, but it shows a shift in Kaiser's thinking toward greater political realism, a process he was to continue in exile in Switzerland. Der Silbersee also bears witness to this shift. In this play we once again encounter revolutionaries from the ranks of the oppressed. Even though Kaiser falls back on individual regeneration in this play, it is significantly different in this case to previous examples. The fates of Olim and Severin are those of individuals, but they are clearly meant to be representative; the problem of mass solidarity is, to a certain extent, solved here without help from a revolutionary-from-above for the first time in Kaiser's work.

The messianic individual as the sole exponent of the revolutionary idea disappears in Ernst Toller's work after Die Maschinenstürmer. This figure does not vanish entirely, but he ceases to command so much of Toller's sympathy. The messianic individual is parodied in Der entfesselte Wotan and treated critically in Hoppla, wir leben!. In the latter play, Karl Thomas' political immaturity is shown particularly clearly by the proximity of his methods to those of the Nazi student. Wotan's crazed ideas may be absurd, but his fanaticism is enough to attract people in search of a cause. The visionary individual's rhetoric can form a cloak over the true aims of the extreme right. Countess Gallig in particular believes she has discovered in Wotan the Friedrich/Spazierer figure for whom she longs:

Heute aber fand ich den Menschen! Den
Menschheitsmenschen! Den Gottesmenschen!
Den Opferer! Den Heiland! Gott selber bricht
ein in Menschenwelt. Das große Ich strahlt
auf am Firmament! (GW II, p. 276).

Toller is criticising the excessively ecstatic language of Expressionist drama here - evident in his own debut, Die Wandlung, and in several plays of Kaiser's, notably Hölle Weg Erde. Gallig's attraction to Wotan shows that Toller came to believe that the visionary fanaticism of the messianic individual was more important than the content of his message. This idea re-emerges in Wunder in Amerika, where Mary Baker Eddy's hypnotic personality is sufficient to gloss over the glaring hypocrisy of her supposedly anti-materialist church. Clearly Toller saw a parallel between the messianic individual and the hypnotic, fanatical attraction of fascism.

Kaiser was to find out some years later about the possible political misinterpretation of Expressionist drama, when Goebbels wanted to use Die Bürger von Calais for Nazi propaganda purposes. This may seem surprising, as it is clear that Duguesclins, the representative of 'blood and honour', with whom National Socialism may be expected to identify, is defeated utterly by Eustache. An article by Eberhard Lämmert shows, however, how Kaiser's intentions in Die Bürger von Calais can be misunderstood. Lämmert believes the unquestioning, completely selfless attitude that Eustache demands, detracts from the original reason for the burghers' sacrificial act:

Menschen, denen man anstelle der Sache die Intensität der Opferbereitschaft zum Maßstab des Handelns setzt, lassen sich vor die Kanonen und lassen sich auf die Barrikaden führen, sie verbluten hingegeben für die Idee der Menschheit, des Proletariats, der Nation - für den, der ihnen die Parole gibt. Die Sache wird zur bloßen Dekoration ihrer Hingabe.⁵²

Lämmert's argument is flawed however, because he regards the preservation of the harbour as Eustache's real cause. In fact, this cause is won relatively easily by Eustache; it is eclipsed by the need to defeat the ideology which makes saving the harbour necessary in the first place: the ideology of war. Eustache's real cause is so radical, that only by encouraging others to surrender their individual wills and by taking his own life, can he ensure its success. The ideology which Eustache opposes is clear upon close inspection of the play; both Lämmert and Nazi cultural policy makers must have felt that this ideology becomes submerged in Eustache's radical methods.

While Toller turns away from the messianic individual, he is also unable to place his complete faith in the

social reformer, which he expresses in Hinkemann. "Wie müßt ihr anders werden, um eine neue Gesellschaft zu bauen!" (GW II, p. 225) is Hinkemann's verdict on the other workers. Despite this annihilating judgement of Knatsch and Unbeschwert, Hinkemann is unable to flee into some sort of individual solution, as Noel Kehoe is in Mississippi. In Kaiser's play, Kehoe and Doris find solace in their spiritual love for one another. To Kehoe, this reconciliation is more than just a consolation: after his revolutionary aims have been crushed, he elevates it to the greatest possible virtue: "Kann mehr gewonnen werden -: dein klopfendes Herz bei meinem klopfenden Herzen?" (Werke II, p. 700). Grete offers Hinkemann a similar 'private solution' to their problems: "Alles wird wieder gut. Wir zwei. Keiner wird frieren. Ich bei dir. Du bei mir..." (GW II, p. 245). Hinkemann's misery is caused largely by social circumstances however, and he cannot flee from them: "Ich weiß zuviel." (GW II, p. 245). There are of course crucial differences between the situations of Kehoe and Doris on the one hand, and Hinkemann and Grete on the other. Kehoe chooses to die in order to atone for wanting to cause so many innocent deaths, and Doris joins him out of a sense of reawakened loyalty and love for him. Hinkemann is a victim, he is not guilty in any sense. Death is for him the only escape;⁵³ Grete chooses death separately after Hinkemann rejects her offer of love and refuge from the pressures of existence. Despite these differences, one essential similarity remains: in both Hinkemann and Mississippi the complex social problems remain unresolved. These problems cause Hinkemann's misery, but unlike Kehoe he refuses, or is unable, to turn his back on them. This refusal to seek any form of refuge from society shows that Toller categorically rejects individual regeneration

as an end in itself: man is too much a product of his social environment to be able to retreat from it, he believes. Even though he may depict morally regenerated individuals, Toller views them always as precursors to social improvement.

In Hoppla, wir leben! and Feuer aus den Kesseln, man continues to be portrayed as a being subject to social forces. But Toller, while never embracing the individual escapism of Kehoe, continues to show differentiated, individual characters, because he feels socialism should fight for the individual's rights within the framework of a more just social order. It is this independent concept of socialism which no doubt led Reso to conclude: "Toller bedeutet der einzelne Mensch so viel, daß er bereit war, ihn über die Gesellschaft zu stellen."⁵⁴ In Hoppla!, the individual catalyst has become shortsighted and impulsive; it is he, Thomas, not any of the others, who is transformed by the end of the play. Thus the falsely-inspired messianic individual becomes part of a socialist movement, and a true enemy of the repressive order. This, however, is not to say that he becomes an unthinking cog in a machine; Eva Berg stresses the importance of living life to the full, of expressing individuality whilst retaining her commitment:

Auch Spiel nehme ich ernst... Ich bin ein lebendiger Mensch. Habe ich, weil ich kämpfe, der Welt entsagt? Die Meinung, daß ein Revolutionär auf die tausend winzigen Freuden des Lebens zu verzichten habe, ist absurd. Alle sollen teilnehmen, das wollen wir doch. (GW III, p. 51).

Thomas is no conventional hero in the Friedrich, Woman, or even Hinkemann mould, as Toller distances himself from the central figure of Hoppla, wir leben!⁵⁵ Thus there is no single protagonist, for while Thomas is

clearly the main character in the play, he also has much to learn from other figures. Kroll and Berg are revolutionaries who have learnt new lessons; Kroll in particular is a 'regenerated regenerate' - he is a sober and rational leader who realises that no isolated 'deed' will galvanise the working-class, as the postwar revolutionary potential no longer exists in the apparent stability of the new Republic. Yet Kroll is more than a tireless worker; he displays individual qualities which cause him to stand out among his comrades, who have come to look to him for leadership and advice. The second Scene of Act II, set in a polling station, shows Kroll to be a defender of humanitarian principles (an important element in Toller's idea of socialism), when he protects the life of Rand, and of the need to retain individuality, rather than to rely constantly on the party to make every decision. One worker considers it prudent to consult the party on the fate of Rand, but Kroll replies: "Die Partei! Sind wir Wickelkinder?"⁵⁶ (GW III, p. 72). In the play's Prologue Kroll had displayed a similar attitude when he derided Kilman's behind-the-scenes party work by calling him a "Bonze". (GW III, p. 20). The critical distance Kroll maintains from the authority of the party probably explains Klaus Kändler's - wholly unjustified - criticism of Kroll: "Sein Albert Kroll aus dem Vorspiel wurde im Stück zu einem kleinen, verknöcherten Funktionär, der seinen einstigen revolutionären Impetus ebenso verloren hatte wie der Minister Kilman, nur daß er nicht zu den Nutznießern des Überlebens gehörte."⁵⁷

Alwin Köbis develops into a similarly mature and intelligent revolutionary figure in Feuer aus den Kesseln. The lack of conflict between the sailors certainly does not mean that they are without individual characters, despite Martin Reso's belief that the officers are "wesentlich schärfer profiliert."⁵⁸ Bütow recognises

this differentiated portrayal of the sailors: "Toller hat das Marineproletariat also nicht als unstrukturierte Masse gezeichnet, sondern er hat es in einzelne Charaktere aufgegliedert, die jeweils eine bestimmte Haltung zur Revolution repräsentieren."⁵⁹ These different views lead to discussion and proletarian unity, rather than conflict as in earlier plays, although only Köbis later realises that they should have instigated the mutiny of which they are accused.⁶⁰ The differences between the sailors are largely in moral and political maturity - Weber hopes for a light sentence for example, but he is hardly a collaborator like Kilman. In Köbis this process of learning has been carried furthest: consequently he becomes the most respected figure among the rebellious sailors. He is the one who is most interested in reading and studying (GW III, p. 142); he is the only one to realise that the elected representatives and their parties will not help their true interests (p. 150 and p. 169); he effectively brings the trial to an end by proclaiming his regrets at not having started a revolution (p. 169); and finally, it is he who persuades the others of the value of self-sacrifice (p. 173). Despite their individuality, despite Köbis' growth into a leader-figure, all the sailors remain an earthy and united bunch, as is shown in the prison scene.

Both Toller and Kaiser discover that the problems of revolution are manifold. Neither can fully accept that material revolution can lead to real, permanent change. Though Toller advocates material change, the doubts he has about its limitations, expressed in Hinkemann, re-surface in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!'. Kaiser sharpens his criticism of social reality, but seems capable only of suggesting utopian solutions or avenues of escape.

Toller refuses to deify the proletarian but is always sympathetic toward the masses, while Kaiser sometimes reveals a despairing attitude toward mankind. Nevertheless, as his presentation of social circumstances gradually becomes more realistic, and as the revolutionary-from-above disappears, a more positive and sympathetic view of the oppressed masses begins to emerge in Kaiser's work.

Both Toller and Kaiser accept the principle of revolutionary violence, though only the latter expresses this in his drama. Despite Noel Kehoe's moral rejection of violence, Kaiser in general endorses it if the ends are considered worthwhile. Toller's thoughts on revolutionary violence are only entirely clear in his non-fictional writings; the optimistic, committed message of Feuer aus den Kesseln is achieved not by solving the problems of solidarity and violence, but by disregarding them. In Kaiser's plays the violence endorsed often takes the form of coercion from above. Toller does not feature revolutionaries-from-above (with the exception of Byron in Die Maschinenstürmer), though he does envisage the bourgeois intellectual as a revolutionary, as he himself was one. This figure disappears from Toller's work after Masse Mensch, however: subsequent revolutionaries are working-class.

The individual remains very important to both writers; but while Kaiser may portray individual regeneration as an end in itself, Toller always regards it as a precursor to social improvement. The messianic individual ceases to command Toller's sympathy after Die Maschinenstürmer, but even Hoppla, wir leben! and Feuer aus den Kesseln, plays about realistic commitment to socialism, depict characters' individuality. Kaiser's Der Silbersee

is similar in this respect: though regeneration emanates from individuals in this play, they are representatives of an oppressed majority which must achieve broad solidarity if any social improvement is to occur.

Notes.

1. Kaiser later applied this principle to his own writing, when he told Karl Marilaun: "Ich sah damals den Zwang, Altes über den Köpfen des Bürgers zu demolieren. Sternheim tut es noch heute. Aber was dann? Sich mit einem Vakuum beruhigen? Wer zerstört, hat nur dann die sittliche Berechtigung dazu, wenn er das freigewordene Gelände, den vom Gegner geräumten Kampfplatz als Bauplatz zu benutzen weiß. [...] Nach der Revolution Aufbau der neuen Welt." (Werke IV, pp. 564-565).
2. It is therefore incorrect to say, as Armin Arnold does, that the only purpose of Eustache's death is to prevent the destruction of material goods. (Arnold, Armin: "Der Status Georg Kaisers". In: Frankfurter Hefte, Vol. XXIV, No. 7, 1969, p. 509).
3. "War unser Tariflohn nicht fünf Pfennig höher als der Eurige? Heißt das kein Beweis?" (GW II, p. 214). These pay scales had been set up by the entrepreneur, who has thus created the divisive snobbery of the Slater.
4. Michael Ossar, in identifying Knatsch's ideas with those of Toller, fails to emphasise this critical distance. Ossar sees Knatsch as "a clear-sighted radical" (Anarchism in the Dramas of Ernst Toller. State University of New York, Albany 1980, p. 132), although he later admits that "Knatsch, too, is unable to offer a solution..." (p. 133). When Hinkemann hypothetically asks how a future society would be able to help emasculated war victims, Immergleich is chastised for his laughter by both Unbeschwert and Knatsch (GW II, p. 219), although Ossar sees only Knatsch's "instinctive kinship" (Anarchism in the Dramas of Ernst Toller, p. 133) with Hinkemann.
5. Bütow: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 220.
6. Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 119.
7. Wolfgang Frühwald believes there are a few optimistic notes in the play (Frühwald: "Nachwort". In: Toller: Hinkemann, Reclam, Stuttgart 1971, p. 93).
8. Altenhofer believes the hope for regeneration is dismissed utterly in Hinkemann. (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 122). Richard Dove points out that the theme of inner transformation

is still very much alive in Hinkemann: "The central proposition of the play is not simply that Hinkemann's problem is beyond the power of Socialism, or any other social system, to solve, but that society cannot be changed until men have changed themselves: 'Wie müßt ihr anders werden, um eine neue Gesellschaft zu bauen'." (Dove: Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller, p. 239). Dove also shows that, despite Hinkemann's indication that no society could alleviate certain suffering, this theme is not fully developed by Toller: "Der deutsche Hinkemann is therefore more concerned with the failure to achieve Socialism than with a critique of it." (Dove, p. 241).

9. Wolff, Kurt: Briefwechsel eines Verlegers 1911-1963. Heinrich Scheffler, Frankfurt a. M. 1966, p. 326.

10. Toller: "Das sozialistische Wien". In: Die Weltbühne, Vol. XXIII, No. 11, 15 March 1927, p. 409.

11. Toller: 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' In: Würffel, Stefan Bodo (ed.): Frühe sozialistische Hörspiele. Fischer, Frankfurt a. M. 1982, p. 113.

12. Bussmann, Rudolf: Einzelner und Masse. Zum dramatischen Werk Georg Kaisers. Scriptor, Kronberg 1978, p. 247.

13. Großhahn rejects religious salvation, and in so doing, claims that there is still something worth fighting for: "Wir kämpfen nicht um den Himmel, wir kämpfen um die Erde, wir kämpfen um die Menschen." (GW II, p. 199).

14. Henry has even adopted the social Darwinism of his masters in order to explain his own social standing: "Gesetz der Natur. Damit die Stärkeren leben können, müssen die Schwächeren zugrunde gehen." (GW II, pp. 132-133).

15. The security forces play a similarly political role in Masse Mensch (GW II, p. 99) and in Die Maschinenstürmer (GW II, pp. 130-131); they are missing entirely from the utopian Die Wandlung.

16. Robert Kauf believes Kaiser "sometimes champions" the idea "that the true purpose of life lies in humble and selfless service within the existing order", quoting this line from Noli me tangere. (Kauf, Robert: "Schellenkönig: An Unpublished Early Play by Georg Kaiser". In: The Journal of English and Germanic Philology, Vol. LV, No. 3, July 1956, p. 447). In fact, Kaiser only really "champions" this idea in Schellenkönig; in Noli me tangere the implication is that a realistic reformer

can bring about progress of the entire existing order: "...und doch fördernd mit Schonung das Ganze!" (Werke II, p. 225). The other example which Kauf gives is Das Los des Ossian Balvesen (1934), but this work was mainly the result of Kaiser's attempts to secure a livelihood under Nazi rule. Kauf concludes in this article that Kaiser's "general outlook on life took shape very early and never underwent any significant development." (p. 449). This conclusion is certainly not borne out with regard to this idea of humble service within the existing order. It is, in fact, an unjustified statement, as Kauf points out certain ideas in Schellenkönig, which are evident in later plays; the fact that certain themes recur does not necessarily mean that Kaiser "never underwent any significant development."

17. That the Pawnbroker is chasing an illusion throughout the play is highlighted by the fact that Luise, whose life he believes to be in danger, actually overcomes her disappointment over Neumann rather easily, as Hans-Jörg Knobloch points out: "Daß jene Luise zu dem Zeitpunkt, als der Pfandleiher den Gashahn öffnet, bei Kaffee und Streuselkuchen ihre Hochzeit feiert, darin liegt die Ironie seines Unterganges." (Knobloch, Hans-Jörg: Das Ende des Expressionismus. Von der Tragödie zur Komödie. Lang, Berne & Frankfurt a. M. 1975, p. 171).

18. The pessimism of Mississippi is echoed in one of Toller's letters from prison. With reference to the minority engaged in the battle for a more just society, he asks: "Doch was werden sie erreichen gegen die mit Pech und Feuer geschweißte Phalanx der Gemeinen, der Niedrigen, der Schacherer mit Menschenleben, der Gewaltsüchtigen!" (GW V, p. 84).

19. The ending Toller describes here is the one he felt should have been staged by Piscator. (See Introduction, Note no. 12).

20. This idea first surfaces in Die Maschinenstürmer. Jimmy counsels patience, rather than short-term action, while the Beggar warns him to be realistic about the masses, but nevertheless not to give up his revolutionary aims: "Erwache, erkenne, daß du mit kleinen Menschlein, gutwilligen, böswilligen, gierigen, selbstlosen, kleinlichen, großmütigen... kämpfst, und versuchs trotzdem!" (GW II, p. 174). The solution to the despair of Hinkemann is not only contained in Hoppla!, it is pre-empted in Die Maschinenstürmer. The concern for patient revolutionary tactics is also mirrored in Toller's writings long before he conceived Hoppla!. We saw in the Introduction that Toller believed Die Wandlung to have a political function, that he wanted to use

this play to win people over to "revolutionäre sachliche Kleinarbeit." (GW II, p. 360). As early as 1920 Toller had written: "Man vergißt scheinbar, in welchem Stadium der Revolution wir uns befinden, daß uns nur zielklare, praktische Arbeit, vor allem praktische Kleinarbeit gegenwärtig übrigbleibt, ja, daß wir aus taktischen Gründen gezwungen sind, ein Arbeitsprogramm für die nächste Zeit aufzustellen, das als teilweises 'Aufgeben' unserer revolutionären Ziele unklaren und böswilligen Köpfen erscheinen mag." (GW V, p. 49).

21. Toller: "Brüder am Schraubstock, am Pflug, am Schreibtisch!" In: Viesel, Hansjörg (ed.): Literaten an der Wand. Die Münchner Räterepublik und die Schriftsteller. Büchergilde Gutenberg, Frankfurt a. M. 1980, p. 347.

22. Toller: "An das Proletariat!" Ibid., p. 351.

23. Quer Durch, p. 98.

24. Ibid., p. 99. John M. Spalek believes that Toller disregards the violence of the Russian Revolution: "In his admiration for the Soviet Union he does not refer specifically to the one fact which made him condemn the Communist Party during the Bavarian Revolution: the use of violence and shedding blood for an idea." (Spalek: "Ernst Toller: The Need for a New Estimate". In: The German Quarterly, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4, 1966, p. 590). However, quotations no. 22 and no. 23 show that Toller was prepared to employ violence to defend the Bavarian Revolution. His criticism of the Communist Party during the Second Bavarian Soviet amounted not to an attack on revolutionary violence per se, but to one on pointless violence. Toller objected first and foremost to the Communist demand for a final bloodbath in which the revolutionary government had no chance, but which, it was felt, would raise the proletariat's class-consciousness and thus hasten the long-term success of the revolution. (See Note no. 28 below). As Toller himself points out, his criticism is in fact in keeping with Leninist doctrine: "Gewiß, ich vertrat die Auffassung [...] Daß die Niederlagen-Theorie nicht revolutionärem Realismus, sondern revolutionärer Romantik entstamme. Übrigens hat ja auch Lenin 1921 beim Kampf der Ruhrarbeiter diese Revolutionsromantik als eine Kinderkrankheit des Kommunismus bezeichnet." (Quer Durch, pp. 99-100).

25. Before the publication of Die Wandlung, Toller read scenes from the play to workers and distributed pamphlets containing excerpts from the work to strikers at the Munitions Strike of January 1918.

26. The Man in Grey, however, stresses the divide between rich and poor; he chooses to approach the Billionaire because he believes the charitable 'Open Thursday' to be a move towards the redistribution of wealth. In other words, his persuasive tactics are chiefly pragmatically, rather than morally, motivated. Friedrich on the other hand, has had no such encouragement from any member of the ruling class, and is therefore motivated by his idealism.

27. The Marxist critic Alfred Klein virtually denies that the Woman is even a revolutionary, because of her rejection of violence: "Die Frau will den Streik, doch der Namenlose, als Sprecher der Masse, will die Revolution, den letzten Kampf um eine bessere Welt." (Klein: "Zwei Dramatiker in der Entscheidung. Ernst Toller, Friedrich Wolf und die Novemberrevolution". In: LGW-Interpretationen 55, p. 56). It is quite clear that the Woman views peaceful strike action as a means to bring about a complete change in the social order: she too "will die Revolution."

28. Richard Dove believes that Wible "articulates the weavers' blind rebellion" (Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller, p. 174), that he becomes their leader because he understands their short-term violent urges. While this is true, there are also indications in the play that Wible does have some idea of long-term aims, but disagrees with Jimmy on how to achieve them. In fact, Wible represents the Communist position during the Second Bavarian Soviet. "Wir brauchen Niederlagen," (GW II, p. 148) he insists, i.e. he is aware that the weavers' revolutionary consciousness must be heightened, and feels that defeats will galvanise the rebellious. Wible believes, as only misery will create rebels, that deeper misery must be created through violence: "Man muß sie wie wilde Tiere aufhetzen!" (p. 148). Thus Wible wants fundamental change, and believes this can best be achieved through greater deprivation and suffering; beyond this, however, he has no concrete plans.

Toller himself describes the Communist position in his piece, "Zur bayrischen Räterepublik. (Legende und Geschichte)": "Es bestanden damals in München zwei Auffassungen. Die eine wollte unter allen Umständen den Kampf, trotz der gewissen Niederlage. Die Anhänger dieser Auffassung hofften, daß die Niederlage die Arbeiter weiter aktivieren und revolutionieren würde. Jede Taktik, die einen Rückzug erstrebe, sei Verrat." (GW I, p. 59). Toller describes Communist policy similarly in his autobiography, Eine Jugend in Deutschland. (GW IV, p. 153). Nevertheless, it would be wrong to see Wible, as Robert C. Reimer does for example, as a "Communist agitator." (Reimer, Robert C.: The

Tragedy of the Revolutionary. A Study of the Drama of Revolution of Ernst Toller, Friedrich Wolf, and Bertolt Brecht: 1918-1933. Unpubl. diss., University of Kansas 1971, p. 72). Wible is not motivated by Marxist - or any - doctrine. Criticism often sees Toller's antagonists as orthodox communists, because of Toller's conflict with Leviné and others in the Second Bavarian Räterepublik, and the tendency to see all of Toller's protagonists purely as autobiographical figures. Rosemarie Altenhofer points out that the Kommis cannot be a Marxist-Leninist reflection of Toller's adversaries in Munich, as Die Wandlung was completed before the Bavarian Republic was even founded. (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 46).

In any case, sabotaging Jimmy's plans becomes Wible's main objective. While he hates his oppressors, he is willing to enter into traitorous collaboration with them in order to regain influence with the other weavers. Wible is more than an illustration of the Communist position in Munich: he is also the personification of a type of fellow-traveller which Toller recognised in prison: "In den Gefängnissen werden diese Leute gefährlich. Im Kreise der Genossen ist ihnen nichts 'radikal' genug, und es ist schwer, gegen sie anzukämpfen, da naive, vertrauensselige Genossen ihnen sofort beispringen und sie unterstützen. Sie möchten am liebsten, daß an jedem Tag eine 'Tat' geschähe, sie verdächtigen den Mäßigenden des Verrats. Der Verwaltung gegenüber nehmen sie eine andere Stellung ein: unterwürfig, kriecherisch versichern sie, daß nur ein unglückseliger, unbegreiflicher Zufall sie in diese Sippe verschlug. Sie sind bereit, über alle Vorkommnisse unter den Festungsgenossen Auskunft zu erteilen." (GW V, p. 54).

29. Karl Thomas sees through the propaganda lies about the war (GW III, pp. 54-56), and denounces the arid intellectualism of the "Gruppe der geistigen Kopfarbeiter." (GW III, p. 86).

30. Kilman's assassination is an isolated act of political terror, something Toller rejected on principle: "Es ist wahr, daß ich blutige Kämpfe niemals freudig begrüßte, vermeidbare Kämpfe zu vermeiden suchte, daß ich einzelne Terrorakte verwarf..." (GW I, p. 61).

31. Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 97.

32. Jost Hermand believes Kilman's position to be somewhat ambiguous, thereby reflecting Toller's greater concern for objectivity in Hoppla!: "Bezeichnenderweise gebraucht dabei auch der 'böse' Kilman einige Argumente,

die sich politisch kaum widerlegen lassen. Rein satirisch wird lediglich sein Lippenbekenntnis zur 'Demokratie' behandelt, die er als den 'Willen des ganzen Volkes' definiert. In diesen Abschnitten trieft er nur so von öligen Phrasen der Klassenversöhnung und der revisionistischen Beschwichtigungstaktik. Wo er sich jedoch gegen die Brutalität der 'Masse' wendet und die 'Gewalt' als etwas prinzipiell 'Reaktionäres' hinstellt, greift er auf die Thesen jener Sonja Irene zurück, die Toller in Masse Mensch als durchaus bedenkenswert empfindet." (Hermand, Jost: Unbequeme Literatur. Eine Beispielreihe. Lothar Stiehm, Heidelberg 1971, p. 135). While Hermand concedes that Kilman is a revisionist who is treated satirically by Toller, he appears to believe the 'principles' which the Minister lays claim to, rather than seeing them as an integral part of his hypocrisy. If Kilman meant what he says, then he would not be so concerned about crushing the agitatory but peaceful, even constitutional, activities of Eva Berg's union. (GW III, p. 28). Kilman has far more in common with Kleidermann, the SPD delegate in Feuer aus den Kesseln, who has little understanding for the ordinary people he purports to represent, than with Sonja Irene.

Other critics also believe Kilman to be an 'honourable' character. Willibrand writes for example: "Kilman's personal integrity is above reproach. He fights off the banker's suggestion that he use his high office for his own financial advantage." (Willibrand: Ernst Toller and his Ideology, p. 74). Kilman also insists that his wife turn down the Banker's expensive gift as it could look like a bribe to the public. (GW III, pp. 80-81). This example of Kilman's 'honour' betrays, more than anything else, his sound career sense; it is conceivable that he rejects the Banker's suggestions out of similar motives, i.e. the desire to avoid political scandal. Be that as it may, this 'incorruptibility', demonstrated in one short scene, is Kilman's only redeeming feature. Dorothea Klein also pinpoints Kilman's supposed integrity, believing, like Hermand, that Toller's greater concern for objectivity is shown by his treatment of this figure. (Klein: Der Wandel der dramatischen Darstellungsform im Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 138). Curiously, critics tend to overlook Kilman's behaviour in the Prologue, behaviour which foreshadows his collaboratory careerism later in the play. Reso, for example, believes Kilman has dropped real commitment to socialism: "Seine früheren sozialistischen Ansichten hat er fallenlassen und sich ganz denen der herrschenden Kreise zugewendet." (Reso: Der gesellschaftlich-ethische Protest im dichterischen Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 168). In the first scene however, we find out that Kilman has played a cowardly role in the revolution (GW III, p. 19). We also learn that he has secretly applied

for a pardon, claiming that he was forced into the ranks of the revolutionaries against his own will; this pardon is granted, and Kilman thanks the officer who delivers this news to him: "Danke gehorsamst, Herr Leutnant." (GW III, p. 21).

33. The fact that Kroll sees the elections as a small step in the revolutionary process, as a "Sprungbrett zu Taten", shows that Dorothea Klein misses the point when she claims that Kroll, Berg and Meller want to change the bourgeois state "legally." Klein goes on to say that this group actually rejects violence (Klein: Der Wandel der dramatischen Darstellungsform im Werk Ernst Tollers, pp. 136-137), and therefore implies that Kroll and his comrades do not want a revolution. However, just as politically productive violence is not expressly endorsed in Hoppla!, neither is it expressly rejected. Legality is not the real concern of Kroll and his friends; the state recognises their revolutionary aims and stops even their legal union activities. The need for mass support and patient commitment is what leads Kroll to respect the elections, not a desire to act legally out of respect for laws which he regards as the instruments of a repressive state.

34. John Wible is able to capitalise on Jimmy's request for patience, as patience is the last thing the despairing weavers are willing to display (GW II, p. 172). Critics have questioned whether Toller makes any ideological progress in Die Maschinenstürmer: Dorothea Klein claims that the play deals with the problems of Masse Mensch (Der Wandel der dramatischen Darstellungsform im Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 77), while Manfred Durzak remarks: "Das geht nur im Verkündigungspathos über Masse Mensch hinaus..." (Durzak: Das expressionistische Drama II, p. 138). Michael Ossar, on the other hand, sees important differences between Masse Mensch and Die Maschinenstürmer, notably in the behaviour of the Woman and Jimmy. (Ossar, Michael: Anarchism in the Dramas of Ernst Toller. State University of New York Press, Albany 1980, p. 98). The Woman incurs guilt, whereas Jimmy remains a "pure revolutionary", Ossar writes. He does not however, point out the difference in class background between the two protagonists. Jimmy is a proletarian, while the Woman is middle-class: she has to overcome old loyalties, particularly toward her reactionary husband. Jimmy also does not perceive a conflict between "Masse" and "Mensch" because of his working-class background; he is, as we have seen, criticised for showing too much faith in the worker. Toller also turns away from the moral aspects of the problem of revolutionary violence in Die Maschinenstürmer. The

play is, in fact, considerably different from Masse Mensch.

35. Birgiwski, unlike Köbis, Sachse and Reichpietsch, gets a mixed reception: shouts of "Bravo!" are interspersed with cries of "Unsinn!" and "Quatsch!" (GW III, p. 149).

36. Schuster, Ingrid: "Die jüdische Witwe". In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 57.

37. All through Hölle Weg Erde runs the idea of universal guilt, for which everyone must atone. A Prison Warden describes the new era thus: "Es brach die Epoche der freiwilligen Geständnisse aller an." (Werke II, p. 134).

38. Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser, p. 87.

39. Prisoner 15 (Noli me tangere) is also an artist-reformer, and as such is the descendent of Spazierer. However, in this play the arrogance and naivety of the artist are treated far more critically than in Hölle Weg Erde. Klaus Petersen quite correctly notes that in both plays the artist merges with the masses, only that in Hölle Weg Erde the rest of society moves up toward an ideal, while in Noli me tangere it is the artist who moves downward, away from that ideal. (Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 94).

40. The Field Commander's actions here are comparable to the Leninist principle of the enlightened professional revolutionary who alone is capable of articulating and channelling the grievances of the masses. Toller was suspicious of elitist tactics among socialists: "Ich las die letzte Rede Lenins und hatte den Eindruck, er biegt die Not zur Tugend um; er fordert die von oben ernannten Fabrikdirektoren. Auch die Bourgeoisie regiere nicht als Klasse, sondern lasse einige wenige für sich regieren, das Proletariat möge daraus lernen." (GW V, p. 156). Toller's misgivings here actually resemble the views of Rosa Luxemburg: "[Sozialistische Demokratie] ist nichts anderes als Diktatur des Proletariats. [...] Aber diese Diktatur muß das Werk der Klasse und nicht einer kleinen, führenden Minderheit im Namen der Klasse sein, d.h., sie muß auf Schritt und Tritt aus der aktiven Teilnahme der Massen hervorgehen, unter ihrer unmittelbaren Beeinflussung stehen, der Kontrolle der gesamten Öffentlichkeit unterstehen, aus der wachsenden politischen Schulung der Volksmassen hervorgehen." (Luxemburg, Rosa: "Zur russischen Revolution". In: Gesammelte Werke IV, Dietz, Berlin 1974, pp. 363-364).

41. The Billionaire Worker says himself: "Ich schütze das Erbe meines Großvaters." (Werke II, p. 67).

42. Here Köbis echoes Toller's final words in Court in 1919, which run: "Aber nach meinen Anschauungen müssen Sie mir zugestehen, daß ich dieses Urteil nicht als ein Urteil des Rechts, sondern als ein Urteil der Macht hinnehmen werde." (GW I, p. 51).

43. Klaus Petersen sees Kaiser as overcoming the crisis brought about by his trial and imprisonment by about 1923: his writing, as a consequence, became less introspective and more realistic. (Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 59). Indeed, it was at this time that Kaiser wrote Nebeneinander. This play's loosely connected but distinctly separate plot lines express the complexity of modern life against which the altruistic naivety of the Pawnbroker has little chance. Schürer also believes Kaiser's plays became more realistic as Neue Sachlichkeit superseded Expressionism. However, Schürer thinks that this growth of realism has little to do with political and social themes, which he believes are only treated superficially and satirically. (Schürer, Ernst: "Georg Kaiser und die Neue Sachlichkeit (1922-32). Themen, Tendenzen und Formen". In: Symposium, pp. 115-138). Though this claim may be an accurate assessment of some of Kaiser's comedies written during the Weimar years (Kolportage, Hellseherei, Zwei Krawatten), it hardly does justice to many of the other plays he wrote during this period. Schürer sees only Die Lederköpfe and Ächtung des Kriegers as evidence of Kaiser's continuing pacifist outlook (Symposium, pp. 135-136): the complex social implications of Mississippi and Der Silbersee are ignored.

44. Kauf, Robert: Faith and Despair in Georg Kaiser's Work, pp. 174-175.

45. Ibid., p. 175.

46. Schürer, Ernst: Georg Kaiser. (Twayne World Authors Series 196), Twayne, New York 1971, p. 134.

47. The process goes a little further in Hölle Weg Erde.

48. Ossar: Anarchism in the Dramas of Ernst Toller, p. 98.

49. See Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser, p. 76.

50. Ibid., p. 87.

51. In a sense the conclusions drawn in Mississippi parallel those of Die jüdische Witwe. While individual

regeneration becomes a thoroughly private matter in the former play, Judith's 'private revolution' - which ironically succeeds in the temple, where she is finally deflowered by the High Priest - is isolated as well. Society is snubbed, but only Judith is affected in any way; as Ingrid Schuster points out: "Die alten Tafeln sind zerbrochen, aber nur durch Zufall und nur dies eine Mal." (Schuster: "Die jüdische Witwe". In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 60).

52. Lämmert, Eberhard: "Kaiser. Die Bürger von Calais". In: Wiese, Benno von (ed.): Das deutsche Drama. Vom Barock bis zur Gegenwart. Interpretationen. Vol. II, August Bagel, Düsseldorf 1958, p. 323.

53. Hinkemann only commits suicide in the first edition. In the second edition, this escape is denied him: the stage directions describing him preparing a rope by which he will hang himself (GW II, p. 247) are deleted. (See Spalek: Ernst Toller and His Critics, no. 24).

54. Reso: Der gesellschaftlich-ethische Protest im dichterischen Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 247.

55. Critical controversy has arisen because Thomas' past has certain things in common with Toller's own - revolutionary experience and isolation from the outside world as a consequence of that experience - and due to the various endings of the play. Thus early critics see Karl Thomas chiefly as an autobiographical figure, an idea which follows the traditional interpretations of Die Wandlung and Masse Mensch, and which, as Jost Hermand points out, continued to dominate the sparse reception of the play until recently. (See Hermand: Unbequeme Literatur, pp. 132-133). While Hermand himself sees Hoppla! as a kind of Brechtian forerunner of epic theatre, in which even Kilman is seen in a relatively objective light (see note 32 above), Dorothea Klein also stresses the distance between Toller and Thomas. Klein shows that Toller uses the figure Pickel to point out Thomas' shortcomings. (Klein: Der Wandel der dramatischen Darstellungsform im Werke Ernst Tollers, p. 141).

56. Toller was only ever a member of the USPD, which ceased to exist in 1922. Despite his outspoken commitment to revolutionary socialism in the Twenties, he remained independent. His Marxist critics hold this stance against him; it was one he remained true to throughout his life. As early as 1917 he made a statement on this matter which he could have written in the 1930's: "Es liegt uns fern, 'Parteipolitik' zu treiben. Politik treiben heißt für uns: Sich für das Geschick seines

Landes sittlich mitverantwortlich fühlen und dementsprechend handeln. Es gibt keine irgendwie begrenzte Sittlichkeit, es gibt nur eine Sittlichkeit, die für die gesamte Menschheit gültig ist." (Toller: "Erwiderung". In: Bütow: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers. Appendix, p. 24. Originally published in Heidelberger Tageblatt, No. 298, 20 December 1917).

57. Kändler, Klaus: Drama und Klassenkampf. Aufbau, Berlin & Weimar 1970, p. 289. Kändler criticises both the behaviour of Kroll and the excessive individualism of Thomas.

58. Reso: Der gesellschaftlich-ethische Protest im dichterischen Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 118.

59. Bütow: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 356.

60. This point is apparently totally missed by Kändler. While he acknowledges the greater emphasis on class conflict in Feuer aus den Kesseln, he now misses the sailors' lack of decisive revolutionary commitment, and ignores the fact that the play is obviously intended to illustrate the growth of revolutionary commitment: "Sie sind keine bewußten revolutionären Kämpfer, sondern werden eigentlich nur durch die Reaktionen der Offiziere in die Rolle von Meuterern gedrängt, weil sie sich gegen einzelne Auswüchse des herrschenden Systems verteidigt haben." (Kändler: Drama und Klassenkampf, p. 294). Marxist critics have been unable to accept Feuer aus den Kesseln, even though this work is closest among Toller's plays to the type of realistic, class-conscious revolutionary drama they see as being true socialist art. Bruno Kaiser and Hans Marnette both believe, like Kändler, that Toller depicts only the spontaneity of the 1917 sailors' revolt, rather than the growth of revolutionary consciousness. (Kaiser, Bruno: "Nachwort". In: Toller: Ausgewählte Schriften, Volk und Welt, Berlin 1961, p. 355, & Marnette, Hans: Untersuchungen zum Inhalt-Form-Problem in Ernst Tollers Dramen, pp. 326-327). In view of his criticism, it is particularly surprising that Marnette concludes: "Feuer aus den Kesseln ist Tollers bestes Bühnenwerk, es stellt den Höhepunkt seines gesamten dramatischen Schaffens dar und ist ein fester Bestandteil der proletarisch-revolutionären Literatur." (Marnette, p. 342). Both Kändler and Marnette believe Friedrich Wolf addresses the same question far more satisfactorily than Toller in Die Matrosen von Cattaro. However, Altenhofer convincingly demonstrates that Wolf's play is hardly more historically optimistic, and that Kändler's and Marnette's praise is based on Franz Rasch's single

line, "Kameraden, das nächste Mal besser!" Altenhofer shows that this line is far less elaborate than Köbis' predictions, and concludes that Wolf's play is upheld as an example of socialist realism because he joined the KPD at about the time he wrote Die Matrosen von Cattaro. (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, pp. 189-198).

Chapter III

HISTORICAL EVENTS, PARALLEL EXPERIENCES AND THE FUNCTION OF ART: THE LETTERS AND ESSAYS

This chapter will concentrate on the non-fictional writings of Toller and Kaiser. Its purpose is twofold: first, it will look at the ways in which Toller and Kaiser responded to major events and circumstances of their time, and to parallel experiences. The second section will examine the views Toller and Kaiser held on art's function, as demonstrated by letters and essays. These non-fictional writings are both directly compared to one another, and are looked at in relation to the discussion in the two previous chapters.

War.

Toller, like his first dramatic hero Friedrich, greeted the War enthusiastically at first, only to go through a similarly traumatic transformation in the reality of the trenches. Enthusiasm for war was bred in German schools, as Toller reports in his autobiography Eine Jugend in Deutschland, when recalling the excited reactions to the Second Moroccan Crisis of 1911:

Wir Jungen wünschen den Krieg herbei, der Friede ist eine faule und der Krieg eine große Zeit, sagen die Professoren, wir sehnen uns nach Abenteuern, vielleicht werden uns die letzten Schuljahre erlassen, und wir sind Morgen in Uniform, das wird ein Leben. (GW IV, p. 36).

Although Eine Jugend in Deutschland - written as it is with the benefit of hindsight - also shows the young Toller to be acutely aware of economic, national and religious divisions and prejudices prevalent in

his home town of Samotschin, it is these in-bred chauvinistic feelings which dominate his adolescence, which cause him to view the French with suspicion even when he goes to study in Grenoble. Toller gets a foretaste of proletarian pacifism and internationalism in a demonstration by socialist workers in Grenoble (GW IV, p. 46), but he is seduced by the promise of the unification of all Germans against the common outside threat: "Der Kaiser kennt keine Parteien mehr, hier steht es schwarz auf weiß, das Land keine Rassen mehr. Alle sprechen eine Sprache, alle verteidigen eine Mutter, Deutschland." (GW IV, p. 50).

What is perhaps more surprising is that Kaiser, who in 1912-13 had written the anti-militaristic drama Die Bürger von Calais, who in 1912 had derided the slavish devotion of the people to authority in Von morgens bis mitternachts, greeted the War with similar enthusiasm. This ardour emerges from a series of letters to his brother, Bruno, who was stationed on the Western Front. What is remarkable about these letters is that they show, in addition to personal concern for Bruno's welfare, a fervent ideological support for the War. Kaiser is not content to send his brother his best wishes, books and cigars, but fills his letters with chauvinistic sentiment and support for the status quo. Thus he venomously condemns Italy's betrayal of the Triple Alliance, in language which pre-empt's Nazi propaganda:

Wir leben unter dem Eindruck des Treubruchs Italiens. Dies elende Schauspiel hat den Ekel vor unseren früheren Bundesgenossen ganz stark gemacht. Wir sprechen sehr wenig von diesem Italien, denn instinktiv verbietet uns das deutsche Reinlichkeitsgefühl sich mit dieser Unsauberkeit zu befassen. Das Tschandalavolk Europas hat nun zur Veranlagung noch den Willen gebracht: Auswurf des Kontinents zu sein.¹

These are certainly sentiments which Kaiser later rejected; but while Toller admits to having held views which he later deemed to be unacceptable, Kaiser rather arrogantly places himself above them, creating the impression that he had always been aloof:

Ich glaube nicht, ein intellektueller Mensch, ob deutsch oder französisch, könne die verrückte Idee haben, daß ein militärischer Graben imstande wäre, eine Trennungslinie zwischen zwei zivilisierte Völker zu ziehen. Die Naivität einer Epoche, die sich noch der Gewehre bedient, um zu schießen, verfügt nicht über die geeigneten Mittel, um ein künstliches Mißtrauen zwischen den Menschen entstehen zu lassen. Ich sehe schon heute die Vision der Komik, welche die künftigen Generationen, ohne Zweifel, von unseren Herausforderungen und Gesten haben werden. (Werke IV, p. 574).

By 1930, Kaiser has forgotten his erstwhile support for the War and describes the motivation behind writing Die Bürger von Calais "als eine Art innerer Abwehr gegen all das grauenhaft Unanständige, das von der ganzen Welt Besitz ergriffen hatte."² (Werke IV, p. 608). Kaiser, after contracting malaria whilst working in Buenos Aires from 1898 to 1901, was never actually healthy enough to join the forces, although he felt at one point in 1915 that he was about to be called up: "Ich glaube, meine Einberufung steht sehr nahe bevor. Ich grüße diesen Befehl schon heute." (Briefe, p. 103). In the same letter Kaiser mentions the imminent publication of Europa, a play which can only be fully understood in the light of its author's pro-war mood in 1915. In Europa, the pacifistic kingdom ruled by Agenor has known only peace for over a century. Rather than portraying this state of affairs as a victory for the ideology of Eustache de Saint-Pierre, Kaiser depicts the spiritual, anti-physical life of Agenor's subjects as degenerate and unhealthy; in rejecting all aspects of physical life - including

war - Agenor's subjects have sinned against life itself. When his nation of dancers is overrun by strong, strutting warriors, Agenor is forced to concede: "Kämpft um das Leben, das allein besteht: echtes Leben ist starkes Leben - und das stärkste ist das beste." (Werke I, p. 651). Manfred Kuxdorf believes that Kaiser criticises - in Europa and other plays - man's tendency to pursue either the spiritual or the physical to an excessive extent:

Er fordert das Ideal des Ganzheitsmenschen, indem er den in seiner Totalität verkümmerten Menschen kritisch darstellt. [...] Erst aus dem Zusammenspiel von Körper und Geist kann der Mensch zur Entfaltung seiner ihm innewohnenden Energie kommen.³

However, the battle between the physical and the spiritual is decided in favour of the former in Europa; it is not just a healthy counterbalance to the antiphysical culture which has arisen under Agenor's dynasty which is advocated: clearly war is very much a part of this triumph of the physical. In this play, Nietzschean vitalism amounts to an apology for war. Kuxdorf does not appear to regard the time at which Europa was written as significant - nor is he aware of the chauvinistic mood Kaiser was in in 1915. Neither for that matter is Robert Kauf, who claims: "In his unequivocal opposition to war the otherwise so protean Kaiser was absolutely consistent throughout his life."⁴ In Gilles und Jeanne vitalism is also linked to war, but is viewed negatively by Kaiser. Gilles' obsessive sexual desire for Jeanne leads to the violent murder of seven young women, quite apart from causing Jeanne's death; this male virility is also seen as a root cause of militarism and war in the play.

Toller's early belief that the War, as a defence of the honour and glory of the fatherland, represented something greater than the individual,⁵ is mirrored

by Kaiser's desire to do something, even if he is unable to fight:

Ich bin wieder einem neuen [Kommittee] beigetreten, das die Verbreitung wahrer Kriegsnachrichten ins Ausland anstrebt. Ich soll Vorträge in Weimar, Erfurt and Jena halten; doch ist diese meine Sache zu wenig. Aber wir fühlen alle: wer heute mit der Waffe nicht im Felde steht, muß in anderer Weise sich betätigen. (Briefe, p. 100).

Kaiser, like Toller, is swept along by the optimistic sense of common purpose - created by the war - which has pervaded the consciousness of the German people: "Noch niemals ist im Volk der Krieg so mitgelebt. Es ist eigentlich alles wie verwandelt, seitdem der Kampf an Eurer Front tobt." (Briefe, p. 105).

Toller is changed by the horror and sense of purposelessness of thirteen months at the front. One experience in particular sticks in his mind: while digging a trench he unearths human entrails and is of course unable to tell whether they are the remains of a Frenchman or a German. Their very anonymity sets off an inexorable thought process in Toller's mind, which concludes with the realisation that men who have more in common with each other than with their rulers are embroiled in a brutal and pointless slaughter: "In dieser Stunde weiß ich [...] endlich, daß alle diese Toten, Franzosen und Deutsche, Brüder waren, and daß ich ihr Bruder bin." (GW IV, p. 70).

While Toller went through this single irreversible transformation, Kaiser oscillated between the anti-militarism of Die Bürger von Calais and the celebration of physical strength - and therefore the violent ideology which accompanies it - of Europa. As the euphoria which greeted the outbreak of the war ebbed away, so too did all traces of Kaiser's support for it.

However, Kaiser's surviving letters from the remaining war years fail to condemn the carnage as well, whereas Toller's anti-war stance formed the basis of the development of his political ideas. Kaiser's letters of these years reflect his growing success. Indeed, it was during the war, in 1917, when Die Bürger von Calais was premiered in Frankfurt a. M. - an event which was helped along by the interest Gustav Landauer had shown in Kaiser's work, and which established him as a dramatist of considerable importance. Yet Die Bürger von Calais was written in 1912-13; a specifically anti-war stance does not re-emerge in Kaiser's work until 1918, when he wrote Gas. The contact with Landauer did expose him to political ideas though, traces of which can be found in the letters. Kaiser certainly never again endorses the idea of war after 1915: we may conclude that while the experience did not impress Kaiser as intensely as it did Toller, the War must have been a kind of turning point for the former as well. The end of the War finds both Toller and Kaiser in revolutionary Munich.

Revolution.

While Kaiser never openly advocates revolution in his letters from the war years, he does give us a glimpse of hope for a new beginning after the War, for a reassessment of old values. He wrote to Hans Franck in 1917: "Hoffen wir, daß es nach dem Kriege zu einem Kriege kommt, der uns vom Übel erlöst." (Briefe, p. 118). Once revolution does arrive after the German capitulation, Kaiser shows little faith in it: he either refers to the Revolution as an inconvenience, or as something which is doomed to failure because it does not set its sights high enough. In November 1918 Kaiser wrote the following lines to Landauer;

they reflect Kaiser's profound distrust of material change: "Was wird jetzt werden? Wird Morgenröte? - oder Explosion? Sind millionen Einzelne da? -oder nur Millionen??" (Briefe, p. 159). These words characterise Kaiser's political outlook of the time: he has little faith in the ability of the masses to change anything, and can only envisage any improvement if the millions were suddenly to become millions of thinking individuals. While Toller's direct political involvement in the Revolution and the subsequent Munich Räterepublik shows the hope he always placed in the working class, he too saw an irreconcilable moral dilemma between the behaviour of the masses and that of the individual. Reacting to adverse criticism of Masse Mensch, he writes in "Arbeiten":

Nur wenige erkannten, daß der Kampf zwischen Individuum und Masse sich nicht nur draußen abspielt, daß jeder in seinem Innern Individuum und Masse zugleich ist. Als Individuum handelt er nach der als recht erkannten moralischen Idee. Ihr will er leben, und wenn die Welt dabei untergeht. Als Masse wird er getrieben von sozialen Impulsen and Situationen, das Ziel will er erreichen, auch wenn er die moralische Idee aufgeben muß. Dieser Widerspruch ist heute noch für den politisch Handelnden unlöslich, und gerade seine Unlöslichkeit wollte ich zeigen. (GW I, p. 139).

Kaiser believed the artist's duty to be to point to the idealistic values beyond the attainable goals of social revolution, and it is with this idea in mind that he explains the purpose of Hölle Weg Erde: "Über die Revolution wächst mein neues Werk hinaus - in das Ende des Jahrhunderts präge ich heute schon die Werte, die gültig sind - ".⁶ (Briefe, p. 159). But while Toller always upheld a modest faith in social change,⁷ Kaiser proclaims his lofty ideals in Hölle Weg Erde without fully acknowledging the possibilities of material revolution. In one letter, dated 19 January

1919, he complains about the "unbearable" and "dangerous" street fighting (Briefe, p. 164), without showing any interest in what is happening. In two others - written in January and February respectively - he dismisses the Revolution as an annoying disturbance; the first - to Otto Liebscher - is written in the hope "daß die Revolution dann ausgerast hat," (Briefe, p. 163) in the second, he longs for spring and "Ruhe im Land". (Briefe, p. 167). This bourgeois ideal of trouble-free peace contrasts strongly with Toller's committed anti-war stance, which by 1918 develops into a socialist outlook. In January 1918 Toller became involved in the Munich Munitions Strike, where his political goals were limited to pacifism: "Nur auf eines kam es mir damals bei meinem Schaffen an: für den Frieden zu wirken." (GW I, p. 137). Lofty ideals are pointless without a recognition of political reality, an anti-war stance is insufficient without knowing who is to blame for the carnage, Toller comes to realise after this experience:

Die Frage der Kriegsschuld ist nicht nur eine Frage der Kriegsschuldigen, die Herrschenden sind verstrickt in das feinmaschige Netz der Interessen, Ehrbegriffe, Moralwerte der Gesellschaft. [...] Die Politiker belügen sich selbst und belügen die Bürger, sie nennen ihre Interessen Ideale, für diese Ideale, für Gold, für Land, für Erz, für Öl, für lauter tote Dinge sterben, hungern, verzweifeln die Menschen. Überall. Die Frage der Kriegsschuld verblaßt vor der Schuld des Kapitalismus. (GW IV, p. 87).

As far as Kaiser is concerned, the only advantage the Revolution may offer is a more progressive attitude towards the arts, and therefore towards the theatre; in December 1918 he advises the actress Blanche Dergan: "Nach München zu gehen - möchte ich Ihnen dringend raten. Meines Erachtens wird Berlin bald politisch

sehr in den Hintergrund gedrängt - und damit auch künstlerisch." (Briefe, p. 161). Kaiser's reaction to Landauer's death is particularly revealing of his attitude to the Revolution. While Toller bemoans the loss from the point of view of an entire revolutionary movement - "Mit Gustav Landauer hat die deutsche Revolution einen ihrer reinsten Menschen, einen ihrer größten Geister verloren," (GW V, p. 33) - Kaiser describes the loss purely in personal terms: "Gustav Landauer tot -: sie haben in seinem Kopf den Himmel entzwei geschossen. Ich fühle mich maßlos beraubt; was das Leben bisher gegen mich katastrophierte, sinkt klein vor dieser Verstümmelung meines Seins. -" (Briefe, p. 168).

While Toller always upheld the principle of revolution (whilst at the same time not ignoring its problems and limitations) he became very quickly aware that the November Revolution was doomed to failure from the beginning. Like Liebknecht and Luxemburg, Toller recognised the lack of revolutionary commitment among the populace: "Das Volk rief nach dem Sozialismus, doch nie in den vergangenen Jahren hatte es klare Vorstellungen vom Sozialismus gewonnen, es wehrte sich gegen seine Bedrücker, es wußte, was es nicht wollte, aber es wußte nicht, was es wollte." (GW IV, p. 111). The German people, war-weary and sick of hunger and poverty, longed for peace - thus Kaiser's desire for "Ruhe im Land" represented a commonly-held view. (GW IV, p. 109). However, as noted above in Chapter II (The Limitations of Material Revolution), Toller also rejects the Marxist theory of the necessity of revolutionary maturity. It seems Toller's view of the Revolution is not entirely consistent; this idea is further supported by a comparison between his autobiography and the speech "In Memoriam Kurt

Eisner", delivered in 1929. In this speech, Toller blames the factionalism among the surviving leaders (after the giants Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Landauer and Eisner had all been murdered): "Die deutsche Revolution ist gescheitert am Versagen der überlebenden Führer, an der Unzulänglichkeit von uns Jungen, die den Fanatismus hatten, aber nicht genügende Einsicht und Erfahrung." (GW I, p. 167). Toller goes on to claim that the working class had been united on all the important points in 1918. (GW I, p. 168). In Eine Jugend in Deutschland, Toller also blames the reactionary SPD leadership of Ebert, Scheidemann and Noske, but this account hardly describes the masses as having been united behind real socialist aims.

Prison.

Both Toller and Kaiser were tried and imprisoned in Munich in 1919-21. Though both were judged to be mentally unstable,⁸ Toller was of course a purely political prisoner whose revolutionary activities brought him a charge of high treason and a five-year sentence. Kaiser's - incidentally much shorter - term was for embezzlement: extreme financial difficulties, combined with an inability to manage money matters which was to dog him throughout his years in exile, led Kaiser to pawn the carpets and paintings of a spacious villa which he could not afford to rent. However, Gesa Valk suspects political motives behind Kaiser's sentencing, citing the offer made by Gustav Kiepenheuer to repay the debt the dramatist had incurred. Valk believes Kaiser's links with Toller made him politically suspect,⁹ but this is probably not the full story, for Kaiser publicly supported the Bavarian Soviet. It is curious that there is no trace in Kaiser's surviving letters of this support. There can of course

be no doubt that this support was never as engaged as that of Toller, but Kaiser nevertheless signed the following statement, published in the first issue of the Mitteilungen des Vollzugsrats der Betriebs- und Soldatenräte, which was distributed throughout revolutionary Munich:

Der Aktionsausschuß Revolutionärer Künstler erklärt hiermit, daß er allein als Vertreter der Künstlerschaft der Stadt München und ganz Baierns zu betrachten ist. Er stellt sich auf den Boden kommunistischer Prinzipien [sic] und erkennt die Diktatur des Proletariats als den wahren und einzigen Weg zur Verwirklichung der proletarischen Räterepublik und des Kommunismus an.¹⁰

Kaiser was himself fully aware of the Bavarian nationalism and conservatism which he felt would influence the verdict. Ten days before he was sentenced, he wrote to Margarethe, his wife: "Und nochmals warne ich Dich aus der Zelle: kein Optimismus! - wir stehn vor dunklen Ereignissen - ich bin in München verhaßt - ich bin Preusse (also Ausländer) ----" (Briefe, p. 239). The conservative Bavarian authorities were possibly intolerant of artists in general, and may well have seen their prejudices confirmed in Kaiser, who had abused someone else's property in order to finance a 'parasitical' existence. These factors all played their part in Kaiser's trial and prompted his famous speech in court, in which he proclaims the artist's right to live above the law.

The arrogance and extremism of Kaiser's words in court may be well-known; the often guilty tone of the letters to his wife prior to the trial is less so. These letters show that Kaiser's defence in court was primarily a consciously exaggerated attack on a society which prefers to stifle, rather than foster, creativity. Kaiser declared in court: "Ich muß meine Kinder schlachten

können, wenn ich an mich glaube." (Werke IV, p. 563).

However, this is contradicted in the following passages from the letters to Margarethe, which, it must be remembered, were all written before the trial in February 1921, and consequently do not directly reflect any guilt Kaiser may have felt over his statements in court:

Es kommt nur auf das Eine an: daß Du und die Kinder existieren könnt. Das ist die Richtschnur meines Verhaltens... (Briefe, p. 223).

Arme Margarethe! wie schwer habe ich Dir das Leben gemacht. Durfte ich meine 'Literatur' so ernst nehmen, daß ich die Sicherung deiner Existenz vergaß? (p. 230).

While Kaiser is criticising his failure to provide for his family in these letters, the bitterness he reveals in court for a system which is able to throw him in prison despite his artistic achievements is in evidence as well: "Mein Prozeß ist eine Blamage für Deutschland..." (Briefe, p. 220). In court he declared: "Meine Verhaftung ist nicht nur ein Unglück für mich, es ist ein nationales Unglück. Halbmast hätte man flaggen sollen." (Werke IV, p. 562). Nevertheless, Kaiser's feelings of guilt were not restricted to these letters: Noli me tangere, a self-critical look at the artist's position in society was written in prison with the trial still fresh in Kaiser's mind. The letters may speak only of his family, but this play reverses the claim - made in his trial and in the Ärztliches Gutachten - that the artist should stand outside the norms which society sets itself. Prisoner 15, the artist figure, learns that he must become "Bei geringsten ein geringer - und doch fördernd mit Schonung das Ganze!" (Werke II, p. 225).

Kaiser also finds the harshness of the prison hard to bear, and he quotes Hölle Weg Erde to Margarethe: "'losgerissen von Menschen - niemand ist so schuldig!'" (Briefe, p. 238). Kaiser was never an ascetic and always enjoyed a degree of material luxury; it was, after all, this penchant which brought about his arrest. Thus the discomforts he experienced en route from Berlin - where he was arrested - to Munich must have been all the more difficult for him. Indeed, they were considerable: the entire journey appears to have taken eighteen days, owing to lengthy stopovers in cold cells, where he was plagued by hunger and vermin. (Werke IV, pp. 560-561). The suffering induced by the seemingly unnecessary complications of this journey are paralleled in Noli me tangere, when Prisoner 1 gives details of a similar odyssey. In other letters to Margarethe, Kaiser describes prison as a stifling environment in which he finds it impossible to work (Briefe, p. 227), as a "grave" (p. 234) and as a "faulige Zisterne". (P. 222). Despite his material neglect of Margarethe, he believes she is better off than he: "Aber: Du bist unter Menschen, indessen ich hier unter verbrauchten Menschenresten vegetiere." (Briefe, p. 221). His response to prison life could also be bitter: "Man wird es stumpfsinnig ertragen müssen - wie ein Tier dahocken -- und ist ein Mensch von seltenster Komplizierung. Auszudenken ist das garnicht! - pfui Teufel! --" (Briefe, p. 233). Prison then, is not only uncomfortable, but does not even cater for the simplest intellectual or spiritual human needs. Even though he describes other inmates as "verbrauchte Menschenreste", Kaiser does not criticise the system specifically for creating this atmosphere of apathy and inertia. His responses are in the main personal; his letters from prison chiefly look forward to his release, whilst paradoxically admitting to feelings

of guilt over his sense of self-importance and simultaneously reaffirming that very arrogance.

For Toller, the harshness of prison life is a product of political injustice, and he records, in Briefe aus dem Gefängnis, in Justiz-Erlebnisse and Eine Jugend in Deutschland, several instances of the blatant abuse of the rights of left-wing political prisoners, contrasting them vividly with the mild treatment of right-wing prisoners, such as Hitler, or Eisner's murderer, Count Arco. While Kaiser longs for his release, seeing in Margarethe a source of encouragement,¹¹ Toller, while he often feels despondent, specifically rejects the offer of an early pardon, not just because this would imply he had accepted his guilt, but because he could only accept early release if all those convicted with him - people who were naturally not as well-known as the now successful dramatist - were given an amnesty.¹²

Like Kaiser, Toller recognises the dehumanising effects of prison, but his descriptions of other inmates, while critical, are always infused with an understanding of the underlying causes of their behaviour:

War am Anfang jeder bemüht, liebevoll in den andern sich zu versenken, jetzt ist er die Nähe des Nächsten satt, er kann ihn nicht ertragen, er wirft ihm vor, was der andere ihm einst anvertraute, die Haft macht ihn krank, die Einsamkeit böse.¹³ (GW IV, p. 205).

In addition to the alienation produced by being locked up, Toller describes the suffering produced by the various punishments - solitary confinement, confinement to the cell, confiscation of writing materials etc. - meted out to prisoners for even the most trifling instances of disobedience. In these cases, feelings

of hatred and violence are quickly bred by the wielding of irrational, malicious authority:

Aufseher führen mich in die Einzelhaftzelle, ich fasse Minuten nicht, daß ein Mensch diese Gewalt über mich übt. Ich brülle, trommle gegen Tür und Wände, der Aufseher öffnet die Tür, ich packe den Schemel und bin mir im gleichen Augenblick unheimlich bewußt, daß ich zum Mörder werden könnte, daß niemand vor solcher Tat gefeit ist. (GW IV, pp. 211-212).

Yet despite the difficulties of prison, Toller keeps up an optimistic mood throughout his five-year sentence. He fights off despair with the spirited claim that his mind cannot be held captive: "Ich bin gebunden und weiß: der Weg ist mir gezeichnet, notwendig gezeichnet. Und weil ichs weiß, bin ich frei - trotz allem!" (GW V, p. 26). Many of his Briefe aus dem Gefängnis show that Toller was able to see positive aspects to prison existence, an attitude which Carl Hauptmann had foreseen at Toller's sentencing. (FT, p. 85). Toller draws strength from his political commitment: "Wer wirklich Sozialist ist, der hat die seelische Kraft, die ihm auch in Zeiten der Haft, der Demütigung, der vollkommenen äußeren Unfreiheit eine wissende, ja eine heitere Gelassenheit gibt."¹⁴ Ernst Niekisch recognised just this devotion to a cause as a source of Toller's strength and spiritual well-being: "Es kam der Gesundheit seines geistig-seelischen Zustandes zustatten, daß er in der Haft nie das Gefühl verlor, eine Aufgabe zu haben."¹⁵ Significantly, Toller remains aware of the suffering of others, even though he was largely cut off from the outside world:

Nicht Angst haben, ich lasse mich nicht unterbekommen, ich zerbreche nicht. Diese Gewißheit habe ich längst: Gefängnismauern werden mich nicht zerbrechen.

Draußen: Blut - Mord - Qual - Hunger-Not
der Millionen. Das drückt viel schwerer.
Und die Ahnung um das Schicksal Europas
in den nächsten Jahrzehnten. (GW V, p. 35).

Like Kaiser's hero Spazierer, Toller is aware of far worse fates than prison.¹⁶ Spazierer repeatedly underlines the undemanding nature of prison life; he himself has been fed and kept warm in prison, he tells the Jeweller, who believes Spazierer has been through untold suffering. (Werke II, p. 116). Ironically, Kaiser never adopts the calm, reasoning views of his own protagonist - his attitude to the drudgery of prison invariably remains one of impatience. In Hölle Weg Erde he shows himself to be intellectually capable of relativising the suffering of prison - once actually subjected to it, this ability disappears. Kaiser appears to have been aware of this dichotomy, however; he asks Margarethe from prison: "Wer bin ich? -: der stärkste und der schwächste Mensch - ... " (Briefe, p. 222). Toller is fully aware of the artificial nature of the prison environment, and he expresses a certain fear of freedom as the date of his release approaches. On the one hand he regrets having to leave comrades behind,¹⁷ on the other, he feels prison has given him the opportunity to see the worker 'naked', stripped of the conventions life outside the prison walls forces upon him. Thus prison has given Toller the opportunity to understand proletarians and their way of life far more thoroughly than he could ever have done outside. Spazierer describes prison life as a form of security, a form of protection from the pressures of the outside world:

Laufe im Hof - und zähle die Schritte nicht:
du bist frei. Abschreite die Zelle - und
zähle nicht: du bist frei. Ermiß die Mauer
nicht mehr - beklopfe die Stahltür nicht
mehr: du bist frei. Wo dringt Gefahr an

dich, da du eingeschlossen bist? (Werke II, p. 113).

While Toller concedes that others, though free, suffer more, he certainly does not see prison as a cocoon. His sense of responsibility is in no way diminished, indeed, it is heightened by being locked up: "Die Mauern sind kein Schutzwall. Was draußen Sie bedrängt, [...] das bedrängt auch den Menschen im Gefängnis und stärker, da er ohne die Zerstreuungen des Alltags lebt." (GW V, p. 134). Nevertheless, in a response to a letter from Toller (see GW V, pp. 80-83), Stefan Großmann asserts that Toller is too optimistic about the world outside prison:

Keine Epoche besteht ewig. Nur dachten wir 1918, die kapitalistische sei ablösungsreif. Das hat sich als falsch herausgestellt. [...] Die Sieger von 1921 heißen: Morgan, Castiglione, Stinnes. Darauf seien Sie gefaßt, wenn Sie - bald! - wieder ins Freie, ins Licht treten.¹⁸

Toller's sense of responsibility drives him to draw attention to the plight of political prisoners in other countries as well. On visits to the United States, to revolutionary Russia and to Spain, Toller quite deliberately avoids the beaten track of conventional sightseeing. He reports on the unjust and bizarre from San Quentin, on the progressive (but also the regressive) from Russian prisons, on the horrifying from Seville and on the experimental from Barcelona.¹⁹ All through these reports runs the idealistic notion that socialism must aim at the eradication of prisons.²⁰ From his essays on prison life, we find that Toller is not only concerned with the political prisoner. Toller believes virtually all crime to be the result of social ills: "Crime is nine-tenths a social phenomenon,

caused by certain economic conditions. The remainder is due to obsessions of one kind and another."²¹ In Der Silbersee Kaiser displays a similar attitude. The Doctor who tends the injured Severin understands the material, economic causes of crime. The Nurse on the other hand cannot sympathise; her remark, "Er hat doch gestohlen" (Werke III, p. 219), represents a narrow-minded and conveniently simplistic morality. Just as Kaiser proclaims the idea of universal guilt in Hölle Weg Erde, Toller rejects the idea of individual guilt, as he feels most crime is produced by a warped society:

Was ein Mensch auch begangen haben mag,
als Gefangener ist er ein unglückliches
Wesen, das unsere Schuld mitbüßt. Es gibt
keine individuelle Schuld, immer ist der
eine verantwortlich für die Tat des anderen.²²

Weimar.

Despite the portrayal of Weimar society as materialist and sensationalist in Zweimal Oliver und Nebeneinander, Kaiser's letters of the inter-war years, like those written during the latter half of the War, primarily reflect his contentment with his increasingly successful career. Although interviews and other statements from the time bear witness to Kaiser's supposed ^{lack} of interest in seeing his own works performed on stage,²³ the letters convey quite a different picture: they are full of concern about the productions of his plays.²⁴ The only reference in his letters from these years to the changed historical situation is to the deposed Kaiser Wilhelm, who is derided as a "Komiker im Exil." (Briefe, p. 259).

More serious descriptions of the society surrounding Kaiser can be found among his essays, but these -

for the most part short and dismissive - judgements reflect Kaiser's rather despairing and contemptuous feelings towards mankind in general, rather than any clear attitudes towards the new Republic. Society's shortcomings are seen as being due to the failure of communal morality to triumph over individual greed; in 1924 Kaiser wrote the following report on humanity's (lack of) progress:

Examiniert man die Menschheit, wie sie bis heute geworden ist, resultiert folgende Note: unreif (dreimal unreif).

Unreif zum Umgang mit dem Nächsten (trotzdem biblisch mit den simpelsten Parabeln gepredigt wurde und höchste Stadtbauten Kirchtürme sind) - unreif zur Politik (die mit dem primitivsten Mittel von Menschenmassenschlachten pseudoglorios operiert) - unreif zur Kunst (man kontrolliere Bühnenspielpläne). (Werke IV, p. 585).

Kaiser describes Europe as 'hell' (Werke IV, 582) and refers to society as "dies schmutzige Meer der menschlichen Gesellschaft". (Werke IV, p. 593). In his non-fictional writings he does not express the wish to confront this society; like the Stranger in Toller's Der entfesselte Wotan (who wishes to escape the "Menschengeschmeiß von Europas Kultur" - GW II, p. 257), he flees. Answering the question "Gibt es noch eine Gesellschaft?" in the Berliner Börsen-Courier Kaiser writes: "Ich lebe mit Kindern und Tieren. Was sich hinter meiner Waldgrenze als Publikum sammelt oder lockert, überblicke ich nicht. Also ich kann mich zu diesem Vorgang nicht äußern." (Werke IV, p. 586).

While his letters chronicle his increasing success, and so appear to be a logical extension to his desire for "Ruhe im Land" (Briefe, p. 167), Kaiser's relationship with society of the Twenties - as revealed in the

writings collected under 'essays' in Werke IV - seems an uneasy one, one in which he recognises the problems but appears uncertain how to tackle them:

Ich lebe ganz eingesponnen in meine Welt.
- Ich begreife, daß man es mir übel nimmt,
wenn ich von den Menschen unserer Welt im
allgemeinen keine besonders gute Meinung
habe. Aber ist eine Welt, die nicht ohne
Polizei leben kann, sind Menschen, die nur
unter der Fuchtel einer Drohung halbwegs
anständig bleiben, erfreuliche Angelegen-
heiten?²⁵ (Werke IV, pp. 607-608).

He may not place this lack of faith in any political context, but Kaiser clearly feels that the new political order in the Republic is superficial, and that nothing has changed very much.

Kaiser and Toller certainly agree on the extent of philistinism in the new Germany, but their reactions are slightly different. Their respective answers to the Vossische Zeitung's question, "Warum schreiben Sie keine Filme?" are particularly revealing. Both are obviously disgusted by the mass production of cheap and shoddy entertainment - what Toller calls "der deutsche Amerikanismus" (GW I, p. 130) - but while Kaiser places himself above films, answering simply that the film industry would be too stupid to understand his scripts (Werke IV, p. 600), Toller blames the industry for deliberately churning out artless rubbish: "Der deutsche Film, auf das Niveau blödesten Kitsches gesunken, hat weder Mut noch Kontakt mit der Kunst, mit der Zeit, mit dem Publikum." (GW I, p. 125).

Toller's criticisms of Weimar went far beyond this sort of cultural commentary, however. He has often been credited with prophetic vision as far as the demise of Weimar and the rise of Hitler are concerned.²⁶

The tactics employed by Wotan bear remarkable resemblance to the methods of the Nazis, and in 1927 the Banker's Son remarks in Hoppla, wir leben!: "Deinen Kilman kannst du in die Konkursmasse der Demokratie werfen. Riech mal die Luft in der Industrie. Ich würde dir raten, auf nationale Diktatur zu setzen." (GW III, p. 31). It emerges from Briefe aus dem Gefängnis that Toller always regarded Weimar as no more than a transitory phase, as an artificial, insufficient democracy without true support from its people. In 1919, on the eve of the signing of the Versailles treaty, Toller easily foresaw the rise of the Dolchstoß myth:

Täte sie es, wird man am Ende vergessen, daß die kaiserliche Regierung und die deutschen Generäle dafür verantwortlich sind und wird die Republik mit den Folgen der Niederlage und dieses Friedens belasten. Diese Belastung wird die Republik auf die Dauer nicht aushalten. (GW V, p. 18).

Weimar is a society essentially still in the hands of the old order - as a result, it panders to its enemies from the right without realising that these enemies are its most dangerous. Commenting on Hitler's mild treatment after the Beer-Cellar Putsch in 1923, Toller can only conclude that the Weimar Republic has no real will to survive:

Will man Hitler durch Milde gewinnen? Er wird die Milde (mit Recht) als Schwäche deuten. Die Republik, die ihre gefährlichsten Gegner 'nicht ernst' nimmt, beweist damit, daß sie sich selbst nicht ernst nimmt. (GW V, p. 174).

As Toller always stood for an uncompromising form of socialism, rather than the social democracy of the SPD under Ebert and Scheidemann, and as he always opposed the accommodation of capitalism by a new regime,

it is hardly surprising that he views the Republic with contempt. From prison he comments on the decaying economic situation: "Mit einer Brutalität haust der Kapitalismus wieder, die den Profittanz des Krieges über - 'jazzt'." (GW V, p. 64). By 1932 the economic situation had deteriorated so much, that Toller felt confident enough to predict a period of fascism enduring for years and only ending in a bloody conflict with the Soviet Union. (GW I, pp. 75-76). The ruling class is able to continue its economic repression and its censorship, "und das alles mit den Mitteln der freiesten Verfassung der Welt." (GW I, p. 73). This crumbling democracy, in allowing the rise to power of Hitler, would thus destroy itself: "Sie [die Nationalsozialistische Partei] wird es sich wohl gefallen lassen, auf demokratische Weise zur Macht zu gelangen, aber keinesfalls auf Geheiß der Demokratie sie wieder abgeben." (GW I, p. 71).

Throughout the Weimar years then, Toller is not only aware of continuing social injustice, but of looming disaster. Despite the anti-fascism of Die Lederköpfe and the direct political comment in Ächtung des Kriegers, despite the growth of social criticism in Mississippi and Der Silbersee, Kaiser leaves no trace of the rise of Nazism in his letters and essays. In January 1933, when the Deutsches Theater crumpled financially and was unable to premiere Der Silbersee, Kaiser wrote (almost prophetically, as far as his years in exile were concerned): "Es ist ein Elend. In Deutschland ist so einer wie ich überflüssig - und muß in Deutschland bleiben." (Briefe, p. 273).

The Crucial View of the Masses.

We have seen an accurate reflection of Toller's anti-militarism and anti-capitalism in the non-fictional writings under discussion here. We have also seen that Kaiser - apart from in the letters to Bruno in 1915 - condemns war and the barbarity of militarism. In disgust, Kaiser often distances himself from mankind in these condemnations, while Toller never ceases to see a deliberate conspiracy at work, and remains sympathetic to the masses. Kaiser may see economic division as a key cause of human misery and stagnation, but he does not directly criticise manipulative capitalism in these writings, despite its effective portrayal in Gas and Mississippi, plays in which he also links capitalism to war. An attack on capitalism is missing from the letters and essays, as are comments on the rise of fascism. The increasingly political attitude which emerges in Kaiser's drama of the later Twenties is not mirrored in his non-fictional writing; the essays were written largely in the early Twenties, so the more realistic attitudes evident in later plays are not accompanied by any theoretical statements. According to Kaiser's surviving letters and his essays, society's failings are not caused or even exacerbated by an elite; rather it is the failure of mankind in general to fulfil its possibilities, even though many of the symptoms of a sick society correspond in both Toller's and Kaiser's analyses.

Both Toller and Kaiser - although the latter author constantly returned to the theme throughout his life - were forced to reject the idea of 'rebirth'. However, while Kaiser makes resigned and often rather bitter statements about the entertainment-hungry theatre

audiences of the Twenties, Toller continues to believe in the revolutionary capabilities of the masses. He is nevertheless thoroughly realistic in his assessment of these masses, who are willing to subjugate themselves to the will of a dictator:

Das ist eine der furchtbaren Charakterschwächen der Deutschen: dieses Sichgewöhnen an alle Einrichtungen des Ungeistes, dieses Sichunterordnen unter die Gesetze der Unmenschlichkeit, dieses Sichwohlfühlen in der Knechtschaft, diese Scheu vor der Verantwortung, dieses Nichthören auf den Ruf des eigenen Gewissens. (GW V, p. 12).

This desire to bend before any authority is not innate however; as usual Toller seeks an explanation and finds it in the militaristic conditioning from above: "Ist dieses Phänomen eine Folge des Krieges? Erst lehrte man den Soldaten, nicht selbst zu denken, nicht selbst einen Entschluß zu fassen, am Ende war er damit zufrieden." (GW V, p. 156). This corresponds to the behaviour of the masses in Kaiser's Lederköpfe: in this play the warriors have become faceless servants (and are threatened with becoming so quite literally) when the inspired leadership of the Field Captain turns aimless mutiny - which is produced when a certain limit to the masses' tolerance is crossed - to organised revolution. However, as Toller goes on to say that true democracy is uncomfortable in that it is hard work, demanding participation in the political process from every citizen, we can conclude that Toller believes the masses rather prefer the lack of responsibility produced by their inertia and laziness. This view certainly corresponds to Kaiser's anger over the masses' philistinism - but only Toller really advocates constant counter-propaganda against this sorry state of affairs.

While doubts about the masses and their revolutionary role are evident in Toller's - initially - private prison letters, many of his public speeches and essays are determined by this need for counter-propaganda. Thus a great faith in the masses emerges from the piece "Die Friedenskonferenz zu Versailles", in which Toller reminds us, in the true spirit of internationalism, of the commercial imperialism of which all Western nations are guilty: "Unsere Hoffnung liegt darin, daß es nur Zehntausende waren, die daran reich wurden and daß die Millionen mit diesen Zehntausenden abrechnen werden." (GW I, p.43) Toller's final words in Court show he believed a revolutionary will to be present within the people at large, rather than created by an intellectual elite: "Aber in diesen Menschen ist auch ein tiefes Sehnen nach Kunst und Kultur, ein tiefes Ringen um geistige Befreiung." (GW I, p. 51). But this will does need to be articulated through decisive leadership; Toller, in bemoaning the moderate approach of the unions to the threat of Nazism in his article "Reichskanzler Hitler" (1931), reminds these organisations of their potential power, of their role as mouthpiece of the masses: "Sieben Millionen organisierte Arbeiter haben das Wort." (GW I, p. 72).

This is not to say that Toller only presented a positive picture of the masses in these public statements, against all realism. In "Reichskanzler Hitler" itself Toller implores the left to take the Nazi threat seriously. But these writings are imbued with a sense of hope that the tide of events can be turned. Where he is negative about the masses, he reminds them of their past failings - allowing the War, foresaking the Revolution - but he ends with the passionate plea:

Wähle Proletariat!
Du bist die Knechtschaft: schwach und verblendet.

Du bist die Freiheit: wissend, wollend und
gläubig.
Entscheide Dich! (GW I, p. 165).

The theme of worker's shortcomings occupies a prominent place in Toller's prison letters. In a letter to Mathilde Wurm, for example, he illustrates the prejudices - against their supposed comrades in France, or against women - of his fellow political inmates, but once again stresses the centuries-old conditioned traditional instincts, which cannot be quickly replaced by a new ideology. (GW V, pp. 126-128). "Der Proletarier is in höherem Maße als der Bürger von Trieben bewegt,"²⁷ (GW V, p. 182) Toller also feels, but on the other hand he has great respect for the honesty and decency of many workers (see for example GW V, p. 144), and feels more heartened by their direct responses to his work than by any critical reception. (GW V, p. 101). Above all though, Toller is aware of the masses' political role: the idea of a ruling intellectual elite is nonsense without the voluntary support of the people, who thus form a basis for power, he writes to Kurt Hiller. (GW V, p. 166).

Kaiser shows little faith in the masses, largely because he finds it difficult to sympathise with what he sees as a faceless horde. In his more idealistic writings he credits each member of a theatre audience with tremendous creative powers which they are able to exercise quite freely: "Ganze Freiheit ist jenem gelassen, der unten zusieht -zuhört." (Werke IV, p. 550). When showing this faith in the masses, he reminds us that they are made up of millions of individuals, and proclaims that each one carries within him his own valid interpretation of the play being performed in front of him:

So trägt jeder sein Weltallbild aus eigener Leistung vor sich - hinter Vorhängen dunkel und schwächer sichtbar und deutlich-: zur Enthüllung, die große Arbeit ist, aufruft das Werk, das oben gespielt wird-: denn hier mühte sich einer um Deutung und Sichtbarmachung seines Weltallbildes - in Mühe vorbildlich dem andern und jedem unten zu gleicher Mühe der Schöpfung, die in allen pulst. (Werke IV, p. 550).

This proclamation - which appears as dogmatically forced as many of his essays of the early Twenties - nevertheless echoes his reluctance to credit the Revolution with any possible positive effects on the masses, because such a political upheaval could never take account of the individuality of people: "Sind millionen Einzelner da? - oder nur Millionen??" (Briefe p. 159).

Art, Politics and Propaganda.

The social criticism and revolutionary themes which abound in the work of both Toller and Kaiser show that both writers were influenced by reality. This section will examine the extent to which Toller and Kaiser wished to change this reality, to influence it directly, via their art.

Kaiser's reluctance - or inability - to credit the Revolution with positive aspects stands directly at odds not only with his membership of the "Aktionsausschuß Revolutionärer Künstler" and his membership of the "Gruppe 1925"²⁸ - of which Toller was also a member - but with his often-proclaimed desire to have real and tangible effects on people through his art. As shown in Chapter II, the effects Kaiser wanted to achieve through his work are evident in the plays themselves - this wish is also well documented in

his letters and essays. As early as 1916 Kaiser wrote to Landauer:

Ich beklage folgendes im Dichter: den beschränkten Aktionsradius. [...]

Von allen Künsten kann allein die Dichtung propagieren. Musik und Malerei besänftigen - die Dichtung ruft auf. Aber man stellt uns zu den 'Künstlern' - zur Musik und Malerei. Die Macht, die auf uns in diesem falschen Urteil drückt - erdrückt uns zum 'Dichter'. Wir können Menschen von hinströmender Wirkung sein - und man lähmt uns zu Dichtern. Es gibt zweifellos eine Dichtform, die propagiert und Kunst ist. Ich suche sie. (Briefe, pp. 107-108).

Kaiser had passionately defended the war in 1915; only two years later he formulated a strong attack on the censorship of the arts and of the theatre in particular. This censorship is obviously a product of a state hoping to repress dissent and subversion in time of war. While Kaiser does not link censorship to the War, he does describe the theatre as a 'battlefield', as an arena where conflicting ideologies must be allowed to clash: "Begreifen wir doch alle: die Schaubühne ist keine moralische Anstalt - sie ist ein Kampfplatz." (Werke, IV, p. 545). Censorship, argues Kaiser, leads to a repression of intellectual argument, and consequently encourages physical violence as the only way of conducting a dispute: "Die Unterbindung des Streites im Geiste wird immer weiter in die Herrschaft der Fäuste führen: der edle Kampf, der erlöst und erhebt, wird verboten zugunsten jeder bösen und unfruchtbaren Rauferei." (Werke IV, pp. 545-546). Toller addressed the question of censorship too; in 1921 he asserted that it is ultimately a product of philistinism among the people: "Daß die Frage nach Berechtigung der Zensur überhaupt eröffnet wird, ist ein Zeichen für die Tatsache des Fehlens künstlerischen Instinkts im Volk." (GW I,

p. 112). However, while he believes that the long-term solution to this problem lies in education, Toller draws what appears to be a more overtly political conclusion than that which Kaiser had arrived at:

"Also: Die Frage der Zensur ist noch eine Machtfrage." (GW I, p. 113). Kaiser sees a "Herrschaft der Fäuste", but these fists do not maintain themselves deliberately and maliciously, they are the products of too much undemanding commercial theatre. But as Kaiser holds censorship, imposed from above, responsible for this state of affairs, his thoughts ultimately are similar to those of Toller. Kaiser's attitudes to the censor are given an - ironically - lighthearted treatment in Die Sorina (1909). The censor is portrayed as a narrow-minded bureaucrat, who, however, is eventually dealt with by a vastly superior artist. Kaiser himself claimed that writing Die Sorina provided an outlet for the aggravation he suffered owing to censorship: "Und wer meine Zensurverbote kennt, wird das Stück richtig verstehen: es ist die mögliche Rache, die ich am Zensor nehme."²⁹ (Werke IV, p. 543).

In 1918 Kaiser proclaimed: "Plattform für lautesten Aufruf ist das Theater!". (Werke IV, p. 550). In 1921 he told Karl Marilaun: "Es [das Theater] ist Plakat, Aufruf, lebendige Wirkung." (Werke IV, p. 564). Kaiser's desire to act as a catalyst for change and improvement also emerges from the following letter, in which Kaiser explains his reasons for setting Der Brand im Opernhaus within a social framework:

Flammend in Genuß - wie der Brand vor den Fenstern - ist der Hintergrund dieser Dichtung von mir gemalt; - aus dieser Verworfenheit einer erfüllten Zeit steigen die ersten Menschen in reinerem Glanze empor - hinweisend nach neuer Epoche, in der die Würde und Lauterkeit des Menschengeschlechts gebieterisches Gesetz sind.- (Briefe, pp. 149-150).

In 1919 Kaiser refuted any notion that he wrote purely for himself, when he described the process of writing Hölle Weg Erde thus: "Neues Werk riß sich aus mir heraus - ich sträubte mich gegen die Niederschrift (ganz deutlich wußte ich diesmal: daß ich Werkzeug bin - ächzendes Mundstück eines Befehls, der tyrannisiert)-..." (Briefe, p. 168).

There are plenty of examples then, of Kaiser's desire to have an effect through his plays on his audiences. Yet there also exist a number of contradictory assertions which demonstrate the reclusive side of Kaiser. As mentioned above, Kaiser claimed several times that he never visited the theatre to see his works come to life on the stage. In 1924 he told Iwan Goll:

Ich habe diese Figuren nicht für die anderen, sondern für mich selbst geschaffen. Ein Theaterstück ist ein geometrisches Problem. Ich schreibe nur deshalb ein Theaterstück, um mir selbst zu beweisen, daß ich denken, Schlüsse ziehen und Ergebnisse aus dem menschlichen Leben gewinnen kann..... Einmal geschrieben, interessiert es mich nicht mehr. (Werke IV, pp. 583-584).

By 1925 the essay "Dramatischer Dichter und Zuschauer", in which Kaiser idealistically asserts that the theatre-goer's own creative powers are mobilised when seeing a play, has developed into the single disillusioned sentence: "Dichter haben mit Publikum nichts zu schaffen." (Werke IV, p. 586).

This seemingly insoluble contradiction can be explained by other, more detailed statements of Kaiser's which were published. One of these is his answer to the Leipziger Tageblatt's question: "Wie erlebt der dramatische Dichter die Verwirklichung seiner Vision auf der Bühne?" Kaiser's published answers to such questions are often

rather flippant and so short that the impression given is that he did not regard writing a lengthy contribution as worthwhile.³⁰ However, while Kaiser addresses the question of seeing his own plays staged in his reply in the Leipziger Tageblatt, the role of the theatre is nevertheless seen positively. Kaiser claims to receive no creative impulses from seeing his own work staged, as he believes the involvement of others - so stimulating to a writer like Brecht, for example - dilutes his original vision to the point of being unrecognisable to himself. That Kaiser only applies this claim to himself and his own work is important, for he does not deny the value of theatre with respect to other works (and therefore with respect to how others react to his work):

Damit wird die besondere Leistung des Theaters nicht angegriffen: es leistet, was es leisten kann. In Deutschland ist diese Leistung sogar sehr bedeutend. Ich gehe gern ins Theater - nur nicht zu meinen Stücken. Das mir fremde Werk empfangen ich vom Theater, wie das Theater es gibt - ich vertraue darauf, daß mir die Regisseure und Schauspieler nichts Wesentliches des Stückes unterschlagen. Dies Vertrauen wird auch selten enttäuscht.³¹

Some critics tend to emphasise Kaiser's reclusive need to flee reality using his art as a barrier;³² Kaiser's many assertions to the contrary and the detailed statement in the Leipziger Tageblatt show that he believed art should confront and influence reality as well. A further explanation of the seeming contradiction between Kaiser's desire to have an effect on people and his reclusiveness can be found in the record of a conversation Kaiser had with Hermann Kasack in 1928, published under the title "Der Kopf ist stärker als das Blut". Kaiser begins by claiming - once again - that his works do not have to be brought to life

in the theatre: "Ich schreibe keine Werke mit dem Hinblick auf die spätere Aufführung - es ist nur Zufall, daß meine dialogischen Dichtungen mit den Forderungen des Theaters übereinstimmen." (Werke IV, p. 596).

But it soon becomes clear that Kaiser has become disillusioned with the low standards rife in conservative and commercial theatres:

Denn es ist mir beinahe peinlich, in zu nahe Beziehungen mit dem Theater gebracht zu werden, das heutzutage andere Wünsche und andere Ziele verfolgt als die: einen geistigen Wert zu propagieren - den es ursprünglich gehabt hat und für alle Zeiten, die sich über das Niveau unserer Gegenwart erheben, haben soll. (Werke IV, p. 596).

Thus Kaiser disowns the theatre as an institution, but endorses the Platonic concept of the dramatic dialogue: in itself an autonomous art-form, designed to influence people, and which, it would seem from Kaiser's rejection of theatre here, would have to be read. This again directly contradicts an earlier statement by Kaiser, made to Karl Marilaun: "Menschenbeglückende Weisheiten sind aufgestapelt in Büchern. Wenige lesen sie. Ins Theater aber strömen alle." (Werke IV, p. 565). Between these two conversations lies the disappointing realisation that whilst people go to the theatre in large numbers, they go chiefly to see escapist entertainment. Kaiser sums this realisation up in a short article - written in 1923 - which begins: "Es gibt eine Krise des Theaters - keine Krise des Dramas." (Werke IV, p. 576). Toller clearly thought similarly on this point: he saw banal theatre as the direct result of commercial pressure. Both Toller and Kaiser published answers to the question, "Was glauben sie, verlangt Ihr Publikum von Ihnen?" in the Berliner Börsen-Courier. Kaiser's answer (Werke IV, p. 586, quoted above) is short and dismissive, while Toller attempts to explain

his position in greater detail, but both replies nevertheless reject the idea of bowing to public pressure. Toller asserts: "Aber: ich frage mich nie was mein Publikum von mir verlangt. Stellte ich diese Frage, mit dem Vorbedacht, dem Verlangen meines Publikums entgegenzukommen, ich würde so Unehntes schaffen, daß ich 'mein Publikum' verlöre."³³ He interprets the theatregoer's philistinism in political terms, i.e. he sees the propagation of artless drama as the deliberate, safe policy of ignorant and cowardly theatre directors: "Würden die Theaterdirektoren versuchen, den Kontakt mit den Massen, der heute noch möglich ist, zu finden, sie müßten tapferer sein als sie sind, sie müßten wissen, welche Funktion in der Gesellschaft das Theater haben kann. Aber sie sind weder tapfer noch wissend."³⁴ In 1917, Kaiser had already paid tribute to the Platonic dialogue in an essay entitled "Das Drama Platons". In it, Kaiser defends drama as an art-form because of the spiritually lifting effect it can have on an entire audience: "Da befriedigt Schauspiel tiefere Begierde: ins Denk-Spiel sind wir eingezogen und bereits erzogen aus karger Schau-Lust zu glückvoller Denk-Lust." (Werke IV, p. 545). By the late Twenties, Kaiser has ceased to idealise the public in this way.

Another explanation of Kaiser's often negative view of the theatre arises from his conversation with Kasack: his fear of complacency. A visit to a successful staging of one of his plays produces in Kaiser a self-satisfaction which he cannot afford, if he is to continue on his creative mission. "Der Dichter soll sich den Luxus einer Vergangenheit nicht gönnen," (Werke IV, p.597) is how Kaiser sums this fear up; in 1922 he had postulated: "Der Schöpfer schafft des Schaffens wegen - nicht um der Schöpfung willen."³⁵ (Werke IV, p. 573). The self-satisfied pride of the playwright

in Der gerettete Alkibiades, who has been awarded the highest honour his state can confer upon a writer, is a consequence of having succumbed to this complacency. While Kaiser may make increasingly derogatory statements about the theatre during the Twenties, his desire to have an effect on people is always recognisable, even if he begins to minimise the extent of that desired effect.

As might be expected, Toller was also very concerned about having an effect with his dramatic work. However, just as Kaiser professed to be searching for the medium which successfully combined art and propaganda, Toller was always very careful to distinguish between the two:

Viele große Werke der Kunst sind politische Dichtungen, doch darf man politische Dichtung nicht mit Propaganda verwechseln, die sich dichterischer Mittel bedient. Diese dient ausschließlich Tageszwecken, sie ist mehr und weniger als Dichtung. Mehr, weil sie die Möglichkeit birgt, im stärksten, im besten hypothetischen Fall den Hörer zu unmittelbarer Aktion zu treiben, weniger, weil sie nie die Tiefe auslotet, die Dichtung erreicht, dem Hörer die Ahnung vom tragischen Grund zu vermitteln, aus dem Leben und Kunst wachsen, oder, nach dem Wort Hebbels, an den Schlaf der Welt zu rühren. (GW IV, p. 224).

While Toller did use his art in a direct and propagandistic fashion in January 1918, when he distributed poems and scenes from Die Wandlung to strikers,³⁶ the Beggar of Die Maschinenstürmer further expresses the doubts which beset Toller about pure propaganda: "Ich meine... Flugblätter sind wie Flugsand. Wenn sie wehen, verstopfen sie Augen und Ohren, aber sie dringen nicht ins Herz..." (GW II, pp. 173-174). It is Toller's doubts about the limitations of propaganda - i.e. its tendency to be too rigidly dogmatic - that shape his definition

of proletarian art. This art, uncomfortable as it is to Marxists because of its distance from party guidelines and its deep sense of humanity, is nevertheless a political, fighting art form:

Wir wissen, daß wir keine klassische Kunst schaffen. Klassik ist der Ausdruck in sich kreisender, überlegener Ruhe. Wir aber wollen nicht ruhig sein, wir wollen keine Elfenbeintürmchen bauen, in die wir uns zurückziehen, wir wollen teilnehmen an den Kämpfen unserer Epoche, und wir fürchten uns nicht vor dem Vorwurf, daß unser Werk ebenso zerklüftet ist wie das Leben draußen. Unsere Kunst will keine bloße Mitleidenskunst sein, sie ist geboren aus Mitkämpferschaft. (GW I, pp. 147-148).

The following quotation is from a letter Toller wrote while in prison. It clarifies Toller's conception of proletarian literature, which, while taking a fighting stance, must take account of eternal human problems, which are as present in the proletarian as they are in the bourgeois:

Die ewigen menschlichen Probleme, wie der Proletarier sie erlebt, gestalten, nur das kann der Inhalt proletarischer Kunst sein. Es ist nicht Aufgabe der proletarischen Kunst, irgendwelche Parteiresolutionen in die Massen zu werfen, das mögen Agitatoren besorgen. Proletarisches Schicksal, Leben, Not, Kampf und Traum der Massen werden dem Antlitz der proletarischen Kunst ihre besonderen Züge verleihen.

Zuletzt aber kann sich auch der proletarische Dichter der Tragik des menschlichen Lebens, die offenbar wird im Proletarier ebenso wie im Bourgeois, nicht verschließen. (GW V, p. 116).

Klaus Kändler, quoting this letter virtually in full, attacks Toller's 'idealistic', rather than 'realistic', position in it.³⁷ What the Marxist critic is reluctant to accept however, are the conclusions of Hinkemann,

i.e. the limitations of material improvement, the existence of tragic exceptions which no new social order could ever hope to solve. "Die ewigen menschlichen Probleme" are for Toller the life-blood of proletarian art, because for him proletarians are first and foremost human beings, sometimes full of prejudice and other shortcomings, at other times extremely noble, but nevertheless always human. Marxist criticism cannot accept Toller's equation (proletarian art = eternal art) because Toller refuses to portray working men and women as exponents of "Banal-Optimismus"³⁸ (GW I, p. 140), or as cogs in a party machine: "Was sich so proletarische Dichtung nennt, ist meist 'romantisch-abstraktes' Gestammel ohne Blut. Masse wird götzenhaft angebetet, jeder Proletarier als Inbegriff 'des' Guten, 'der' Liebe, 'der' Gerechtigkeit angehimmelt, jede tragische, nur sozialpsychologisch erklärliche Erscheinung als 'absolutes Wunder' behymnet."³⁹ This - in fact very realistic - position is derided as being too idealistic because it fails to measure up to the standards of realism set by Marxist criticism: namely, that all problems be regarded in terms of class conflict, and therefore be seen as resolved once class barriers are eliminated. Toller felt that without a realism unallied to party doctrine, nothing would ever change and discussion would be stifled:

Er [der Proletarier] muß sich sehen, sich in seiner seelischen Roheit, seiner Vergewaltigungsgier, seiner Hilflosigkeit, seiner Schwäche, seiner Feigheit, seiner Verzagtheit, seiner Untreue gegen sich und die Sache, sich in seinem Mute, seiner heroischen Haltung, seinem Traum.

Er muß sich reden und überreden, klagen und anklagen, lachen und verlachen hören. Ecce Proletarier! Dieses Gefühl muß ihn erschüttern, wenn das Kunstwerk ihn ergreifen soll. (GW V, p. 182).

What Marxist criticism finds most irksome is Toller's independent stance, his refusal to acknowledge the KPD as the only true representative of the working class. The notion of 'timeless art' alone should not worry Kändler, as even Johannes R. Becher endorsed it, albeit for a post-revolutionary society: "Reine Kunstwerke sind für die Zeit nach dem Siege da."⁴⁰ Similarly, Kaiser did not view the use of contemporary themes in his work as a limitation, but rather, as a method for delving into timeless questions. Of Gas he writes: "Was ist Gas? Was sind hier Arbeiter? Mittel der Gegenwart, um ins Menschunendliche vorzudringen; [...]; den Aufruf zu uns, der so am schärfsten laut werden kann." (Werke IV, p. 566) Kändler, who concedes that Kaiser's work - like Toller's - contains accurate comment on contemporary social problems, criticises it in much the same way as he attacks that of Toller: Kaiser is unable to grasp man as a "gesellschaftliches Wesen". Kändler concludes: "Dieser philosophische Grundirrtum überschattet sein ganzes Leben."⁴¹ Although Toller expresses his dramatic theory in more socialist terms, both he and Kaiser insist on tackling eternal problems ("Die ewigen menschlichen Probleme"/"[das] Menschunendliche") which exist outside the political arena.

The Function of Art.

Toller's conception of proletarian art is a compromise between the notion of timeless classicism and purely agitatory, political drama which follows dogmatic formulas. Thus he both rejects apolitical art, and endorses the timeless and eternal. Timeless art does not, however, mean objective, non-partisan art. Indeed, Toller believes that there is no such thing anyway. In 1928, both he and Kaiser replied to the question

'Soll das Drama eine Tendenz haben?' in the periodicals Der Scheinwerfer and Die Scene. Significantly, Toller's reply is a good deal longer and more detailed than Kaiser's - significant, because Toller considered this question to be of central importance to his concept of politically-informed art. While Kaiser apparently believes that drama can exist without bias - although he concedes that 'good' bias should be built into drama (Werke IV, p. 595) - Toller claims that the question itself is nonsense, believing that all art is biased in some way. 'Bias' is a relative notion, Toller asserts, the words "Tendenz" and "Gesinnung" are used by bourgeois critics to attack anti-establishment art. Toller feels such criticism is a deliberate diversionary tactic: "Welchen Eiertanz mit dem Wort Gesinnung spielen manche Edeltöner! Man zeige mir große Kunst ohne Gesinnung."⁴² Toller recognises that the standards of the bourgeoisie are themselves biased: "Die Tendenzschnüffler, die fähig wären, auch ihre eigene bürgerliche Gesinnung als wohlumrissene Tendenz zu erfassen, würden ihr Wunder erleben."⁴³ (GW I, p. 117). Four years earlier, while still in prison, Toller addressed the same question, and came up with much the same results:

Es gibt keine Dramen ohne politische Elemente. Drama ist Gestaltung von Beziehungen societärer Menschen. Nur der Bürger wähnt, es gäbe Societas ohne soziale und politische Bindung. Dabei sprechen seine Schulen gerade die Werke heilig, die am stärksten politisch tendieren. Da sie dahin tendieren, wohin er tendiert, sind sie frei von Tendenz. (GW V, p. 191).

The idea of bias is thus inextricably linked to that of censorship, as the former leads to the latter, and both are excuses for maintaining power. Kaiser's vague political outlook prevents him from seeing this connection, while Toller addresses himself to the

questions of art and propaganda, and of bias and censorship, linking them all, and forming a clear and consistent theory of drama - and art in general - around them. Yet all the time Toller insists on reminding us of that timeless, eternal element in art which is above all bias, an insistence which irritates Marxist critics:

Daß es 'zeitlose' Elemente in der Kunst gibt, Ausdruck der kosmischen Beziehungen, die kaum merklich sich ändern, bestreitet kein ernsthafter Künstler. Auch revolutionäre dramatische und epische Kunst wird neben Zeitaktivität Besinnung auf jenes Letzte in uns wecken, das Angelus Silesius 'Unio Mystica' nannte, and das ich nennen möchte: Stille des All. Von sinnlicher Gegenwart erfüllt, wird der kämpfende Künstler sie ahnend gestalten. (GW I, p. 136).

Toller also builds Expressionism into his concept of proletarian/eternal art. Both he and Kaiser endorsed Expressionism as a positive phenomenon. Toller sees the real introduction of the proletarian to the stage as being an achievement of Expressionism, though he concedes that Büchner and Hauptmann wrote plays set within a working-class environment. However, he believes that the proletarian protagonist of Expressionism is a more enlightened, conscious figure than the impotent Woyzeck or Hauptmann's weavers (and thus a more revolutionary figure): "Im neuen Drama ist der proletarische Mensch aktiv, bewußt, gegen sein Geschick rebellierend, für eine neue Wirklichkeit, eine neue Gesellschaftsordnung kämpfend." (GW I, p. 127). Though Kaiser does not specify 'proletarian' figures, he too saw the new drama as a constructive social force, as an active, rather than passively commenting art-form:

Ich mußte nun deutlich machen, daß nach dem Neinsagen die andere, nach der nötigen die größere Aufgabe kommt. Daß ich das, was einem neuen, besseren, glücklicheren,

menschlicheren Menschentum im Wege stand, nicht nur wegräumen konnte, sondern jetzt die Fundamente dieser besseren, glücklicheren Welt zu errichten habe. (Werke IV, p. 565).

Toller clearly believed that any art which is designed to influence and change the world, is superior to any naturalistic, 'photographic' and consequently unquestioning art: "Denn auf diese Umwelt einzuwirken, war die Absicht des Expressionismus, sie wollte er ändern, ihr ein gerechteres, helleres Gesicht geben." (GW I, p. 137). The influential idea is also what characterises Expressionism in the eyes of Georg Kaiser. But while Toller uses the term 'Expressionism' - looking back at it from 1930 - in the historical context in which we understand it, Kaiser uses the term as early as 1922, when, although the creative force of Expressionism was more or less spent, the label was still a relatively new one. Kaiser makes the equation Expressionism = art, and claims: "Wir erleben die größte Epoche der Kunst:- der Expressionismus ist da." (Werke IV, p. 572). A year later, Kaiser is still using 'Expressionism' to mean art; while Toller understands the movement's limitations, but defends it as a necessary step forward, Kaiser claims it is the most powerful form of theatre: "Die Kraft des Dramas des Expressionismus ist so groß, daß sie Generationen überspringen kann, ohne ein Gramm ihres Pfunds einzubüßen." (Werke IV, p. 576) What, however, is art as far as Kaiser is concerned?: "Die Definition für Kunst: Ausdruck der Idee, die unzeitlich - allgegenwärtig ist." (Werke IV, pp. 571-572). This timeless idea can be conveyed only through the artist's intervention in the aimless confusion of nature: "Die Ordnung des Wirrwarrs von Figur und Natur in die immanente Idee macht Kunst." (Werke IV, p. 572). Kaiser's ideas about the function of drama centre around two principles: 1) the regeneration of man, and 2) the propagation

of 'timeless' truths, which he believes are the essence of art. The first principle is essentially revolutionary, and fits in with Kaiser's assertion (quoted above, Chapter II, Note 1) that he desired to create a new, post-Sternheim theatre promoting alternative, positive values, and with the formulation: "Drama ist Bedrohung des Zuständlichen." (Werke IV, p. 575) In the essay Dichter und Regisseur, Kaiser gives the writer's revolutionary role central importance, thereby saying that this revolutionary attitude is an essential ingredient of art itself: "Der lebendige Autor muß wissen, daß er der Widersacher der Sitten und Formeln seiner Mitzeit ist - sonst griffe er fehl im Mittel seiner Äußerung, die Kunst heißt." (Werke IV, p. 553). In his famous essay "Vision und Figur" (1918), Kaiser stresses the necessity of repetition in a playwright's oeuvre, as he is possessed by one solitary vision: "Einer Vision ist Hülse der Dichter [...] Gleich bleibt Werk von Werk zu Werk." (Werke IV, p. 547). The theme may remain the same, but the figures which carry this vision are myriad - each one is a small pillar of a central idea. It can be argued that Kaiser never quite managed to shed the passionate language of Expressionism, but certainly, despite his advocacy of the movement, he believes that only cool reasoning can be the language of the vision: "Im Schrei will es sich aus dem Munde reißen - Aufschrei aus Entsetzen und Zorn! - zur Stimme muß er herabsinken, um wirkend zu werden."⁴⁴ (Werke IV, p. 549). At the end of the essay, Kaiser finally addresses himself to the nature of this vision: "Von welcher Art ist die Vision? Es gibt nur eine: die von der Erneuerung des Menschen." (Werke IV, p. 549). The artist's role in society is to remind people constantly of this vision, which is central to all creation. Kaiser writes in "Die Fibel" (1918): "[...] mitten im Volk steht der Künstler da, das sich schafft aus

Vision, die ihm der Künstler bestätigt." (Werke IV, p. 549). In addition to these theoretical postulations about the revolutionary duty of the artist, Kaiser claimed - on two recorded occasions - that he wished to help the underprivileged with his work. The first of these passages appeared in the Svenska Dagbladet. It begins: "Meine szenischen Werke haben stets denselben Ausgangspunkt: das Bedürfnis, diejenigen zu verteidigen, die im Schatten leben." (Werke IV, p. 592). On the second occasion Kaiser claims to be driven to writing by his social conscience: "Ich bin ganz einfach gezwungen worden, von jenen Menschen zu schreiben, die vom Schicksal ungerecht behandelt werden." (Werke IV, p. 594).

The revolutionary intent of Kaiser's work is clear then - but what exactly was new about his New Man? According to his essays, Kaiser regarded the pursuit of a single occupation as one of the greatest problems facing modern man. He consequently formulated the idea of "der gekonnte Mensch"; this idea had great social implications, as Kaiser explains to Karl Marilaun:

Ich hoffe auf Menschen, die nicht die und das können, also im Bergwerk arbeiten, ein Flugzeug führen, Stiegen reinigen oder dichten - sondern auf gekonnte Menschen. Wir haben uns unter Gewalt und gottgewollter Ordnung spezialisiert. Diener die einen, Herr der andere. Aber niemand ist erschaffen, lediglich Bausteine zu tragen, während der andere wohnt. Das Auto zu führen, in dem der andere sitzt. Im Bergwerk zu fördern, während der andere sich einheizen läßt. Der gekonnte, der in sich vollendete Mensch wird jede nötige Arbeit tun, nämlich jeder wird sie tun und so wird auch jeder sowohl Herr als Diener sein. (Werke IV, p. 565).

In this conversation Kaiser pinpoints social and economic division as the chief cause of human stagnation, but this picture of society omits the idea of repression completely. While many 'servants' may well wish to

express themselves in some other way, they may be prevented from doing so by their masters. Thus the New Man must arrive simultaneously from above and below: an event which Kaiser admits to be far into the future in "Der kommende Mensch" (Werke IV, p. 567), and an idea which clearly corresponds to that of the revolutionary-from-above. While Kaiser sees in this essay that man is hampered by economic relationships (Werke IV, p. 568), he believes that man is strong enough to overcome this cruel system, citing his ability to survive it: "Das Gesetz der Zeit bestimmt über ihn: mißstaltet ihn wohl - doch beugt ihn nicht zur Vernichtung." (Werke IV, p. 568) In practical terms, the New Man is the selfless type encouraged by Eustache: "Er haßt die Dummheit - aber er nützt sie nicht mehr aus." (Werke IV, p. 581).

The idealistic essays which proclaim the (eventual) advent of this New Man are all from the early Twenties, when Kaiser appears to have had considerable faith in the creative powers of man.⁴⁵ Kaiser loses this faith during the course of the Twenties to a large extent - we need only look back at his disgust at theatre audiences to see this. Toller also loses faith in 're-birth': "Könnte ich nur wie früher an Neugeburt, an reineres Werden glauben," (GW V, p. 35) he lamented from prison in 1920. The idea of repression is incorporated into the plays Kaiser wrote during the latter half of Weimar, as we have seen. The hope that emanates from, for example, Die Lederköpfe or Der Silbersee is, however, not reflected in any letters, nor is it given any theoretical support in the form of essays. Bitter, cynical remarks tend to predominate; in 1931, when asked to sum up his life, Kaiser remarked: "Alles bereuen und alles verachten." (Werke IV, p. 609).

The second principle of Kaiser's theory of drama⁴⁶ may, at first glance, seem to contradict the revolutionary basis of the first. How can 'eternal truths' be reconciled with the advocacy of change? Nothing in Kaiser's essays exemplifies this link more than a statement from "Ein Dichtwerk in der Zeit", already quoted above. "Mittel der Gegenwart, um ins Menschunendliche vorzudringen..." (Werke IV, p. 566 - my emphasis) is how Kaiser describes the techniques of the revolutionary Gas plays. In order to expose these truths, Kaiser deliberately manipulates the chaos that is history. He despairs at man's inability to learn from this chaos (and once again we find the idea of social inequality creeping into Kaiser's theorising):

Was alles die Menschen fertig gekriegt haben
- unter sich, gegen sich -, man faßt sich
an den Hinterkopf. Da ist Weltmord und
Welttotschlag und Weltkrieg - mitten aus
dem Blutbad zwischen Kirchen in den ahnungslosen
Blauhimmel. Einer fährt Auto - der nächste
leert Latrinen. Einer schießt - der andere
fällt. (Werke IV, p. 576).

A purely factual reflection of this chaos could never satisfy the function of art - namely, to present man with an alternative to this confusion and thereby save him:

Ins Sinnlose baut sie [die Kunst] Gerüst
von Notwendigkeit. Wahllos vorgeworfenes
Material verteilt sie zu Bau. Das Tiertum
Mensch treibt sie mit diesem Willen zur
Erfindung der Idee aus seiner Selbstschändung
ins Paradies zurück. (Werke IV, p. 577).

Thus Kaiser justifies his interferences with historical fact in plays such as Gilles und Jeanne, Die Bürger von Calais or Die Flucht nach Venedig. While historical events may not be reflected accurately, the new sense the artist is able to give them, by suggesting the

way man could be, actually reveals a greater, timeless truth: "Was ist da mit öder Abschilderei der Natur getan? [...] Geiles Mitmachen der Zeit, das vom Geist der Allzeit nicht den Hauch gesogen hat!" (Werke IV, p. 579 - my emphasis). In Die Maschinenstürmer Toller also manipulates history, setting the play in 1815, but including the technological achievements of the 1840's. Toller himself declared that he wished to portray the rise of the class-conscious Twentieth Century proletarian in this play,⁴⁷ and the effect of his portrayal was more important to him than historical accuracy. The reflection of history in Feuer aus den Kesseln, on the other hand, is far more accurate. When reduced to the common aim of having a didactic impact on an audience, this difference in presentation is irrelevant. However, the documentary style of Feuer aus den Kesseln is designed to have a more immediate effect; this drama of political injustice is heightened by its close adherence to historical fact. This respect for history is certainly seen as far more productive from the Marxist point of view. Kaiser's use of history betrays his idealistic longing for a truth which men may perceive, but never actually make the basis of their actions. As Kändler observes: "Kaiser hingegen tritt der Geschichte immer noch als subjektiver Idealist gegenüber, er zitiert sie vor den Richterstuhl seiner Vernunft."⁴⁸ Nevertheless, Feuer aus den Kesseln, whilst based largely on documentary sources, is hardly meant to be 'objective'. Toller himself distinguished between reportage and art and arrived at a similar interventionist conclusion as Kaiser: "Reportage hat ihre Bedeutung. Das Drama, wie alle Kunst, muß mehr sein, nämlich Verdichtung, Stufung und Gestalt. Erst dadurch wird Reportage auch künstlerische Wahrheit." (GW I, p. 130 - my emphasis).

The Artist's Moral Obligations.

Es ist beinahe eine Frage der Moral:
 Dichter zu bleiben.
 - Kaiser: Werke IV, p. 580.

Both Kaiser and Toller express doubts about the moral defensibility of the artist's position. We shall see that - once again - Toller's direct political involvement provides him with a clear-cut answer to this problem.

Kaiser's case is somewhat more complicated. Several of his plays, particularly earlier works like Die jüdische Witwe and Der Geist der Antike (1905), show their author's awareness of the conflict between body and mind. This conflict is reflected in the essays. Many of these essays - such as "Das Drama Platons" or "Formung von Drama" (1922) - describe the artist's work as the highest form of creation, and as such man's most important activity. In the latter piece, Kaiser even describes the dramatist as "die kräftigste Art Mensch". (Werke IV, p. 573). In "Die Sinnlichkeit des Gedankens" (1925) the artistic process is given physical, sensual dimensions, and the artist himself, as the creator of beauty, is described as the one truly passionate lover. However, there are other indications in these writings which show that Kaiser actually felt rather guilty about his occupation. In "Wie die Dramatiker arbeiten" he writes, for example: "Denn es ist doch kein Beruf für einen großen, erwachsenen Kerl, ein oder zwei Theaterstücke im Jahr zu schreiben." (Werke IV, p. 594). Kaiser also expressed such doubts very early in his career in the play Hete Donat (1909). Donat is a dilettante and a parasite, an artist who produces nothing (and not, as Walter Huder believes,

a victim of the establishment⁴⁹). Kaiser tends to condemn intellectualism, claiming to have no contact with other literary figures. (Werke IV, p. 584) In 1930 he told the Neues Wiener Journal:

Im allgemeinen bin ich dafür, möglichst unabhängig von allem zu sein, was Tun im geistigen Sinne ist. [...] Wir tragen ja alle viel zu viel Bildungsballast mit uns herum, den wir erst los werden müssen, um zu uns selbst, zu reinem Gefühl, zur Erdenliebe zu kommen. Ich finde, daß Wandern, Sporttreiben, seinen Körper spüren und beherrschen lernen, weitaus nützlicher ist als viel lesen, zumal das meiste davon ja doch nicht wert ist, daß man es behält und mit sich herumschleppt. (Werke IV, p. 608).

This disrespect for intellectual work helps to explain Kaiser's fear of laziness and complacency. While his letters show that he was in fact concerned about productions of his plays, the sheer volume of his dramatic oeuvre shows he cannot have lingered over any one work for very long. In order to compensate for what he refers to as 'no real occupation for a grown man', Kaiser punishes himself, demanding constant discipline and activity: "Ziel des Seins ist der Rekord. [...] Der Mensch der Höchstleistungen ist der Typ der Zeit..." (Werke IV, p. 580). The artist must not abuse his privileged position: "Es ist Pflicht für den Schöpfer: von jedem Werke sich abzuwenden und in die Wüste zu gehen; taucht er wieder auf, muß er sehr viel mitbringen - aber sich im Schatten seiner Sykomoren eine Villa mit Garage bauen: das geht nicht." (Werke IV, p. 581). Toller also criticised complacent intellectualism, but as so often, his attitude had more political causes than that of Kaiser. Toller does not deny the achievements of the bourgeoisie,⁵⁰ but he believes the middle class, with its supposedly apolitical intellectualism, to be morally bankrupt: "Hat die bürgerliche Bildung mit ihren reinen Absichten

den Weltkrieg verhindert?"⁵¹ Toller rejected Kurt Hiller's demands for an intellectual elite partly for the same reason: "Sie setzen voraus, daß jeder 'Geistige' a priori ein höheres Urteilsvermögen habe als Piefke. Denken Sie einmal daran, was die 'Geistigen' im Krieg für ein Urteilsvermögen besaßen." (GW V, p. 166). In the poem, "An die Dichter", Toller attacks the intellectual who believes himself to be above the fray, but who, by refusing to take a political standpoint, condones the War.⁵²

We have seen that Toller was reluctant to produce 'classical' literature, to indulge himself in pure aesthetics. "Es gibt Werke, die literarisch zu werten nicht das Wesentliche ist. [...] Hier erfüllt die Schaubühne unmittelbar ethische Aufgaben,"⁵³ remarks Toller about Karl Maria Finkelnburg's play, Amnestie. Morally defensible art fulfils a socially useful purpose, Toller believes. This view emerges in other writings,⁵⁴ but in none more clearly than in a homage to Henri Barbusse, in which he attacks the "Gewissenlosigkeit des absoluten Dichters." (GW I, p. 121). In describing Barbusse's political commitment, Toller is clearly airing his own dislike of the bourgeois intellectual, and the resulting attack could be aimed at Georg Kaiser:

Klarheit will er vor allem finden, und er glaubt anfangs, die geistigen Menschen, die Intellektuellen, müßten die Berufenen sein. Aber bald sieht er ihre Halbheiten, ihre Torheiten, ihren Selbstbetrug. Sie geben vor, den Krieg zu bekämpfen und wollen seine sozialen Ursachen nicht bekämpfen... (GW I, pp. 122-123).

The lack of social and political insights characterises much of contemporary drama, Toller believes, and he blames the tangled and confused mass of ideas emerging from these plays on the decaying, outmoded values

of the bourgeoisie, which form the basis of this apolitical art:

Unsere Dramatiker gehören der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft an. Da die bürgerliche Gesellschaft die organische Einheit verloren hat, da sie zerfallen ist, ausgelaugt im Chaos altgewordener, greiser Kräfte, von keinem Stern Licht und Glut empfangend, bieten auch ihre Dramatiker das Bild greiser Wirrung. (GW V, p. 93).

When Kaiser addressed contemporary political problems in Die Lederköpfe, thus recalling the social themes of his most famous Expressionist plays, Toller approved: "Georg Kaiser ist mit seinem Drama Die Lederköpfe zum Stil seiner großen Werke zurückgekehrt."⁵⁵ However, Toller believes that the true revolutionary artist does not simply distinguish himself through his work, but also through his direct political involvement. Of Barbusse Toller writes:

Er ist wahrhaft ein revolutionärer Dichter, denn dieses zeichnet den revolutionären Dichter aus: In jedem entscheidenden Augenblick vom Schreibtisch aufzustehen und sich einzusetzen mit der Stimme und mit der Tat gegen Unrecht und Vergewaltigung. (GW I, p. 124).

Toller naturally applies this principle to himself as well: "Arbeite ich, bin ich von der Arbeit besessen, aber ich weiß, daß wieder Entscheidungen fallen können, in denen persönlicher Einsatz wichtiger ist als Kunst." (GW I, pp. 148-149). He found himself following this idea not only throughout his years in exile, but also refused to confine himself to his artistic activities before 1933. The most obvious example of his extra-literary political involvement is his part in the revolutionary Bavarian Räterepublik, but he also remained active after his release from Niederschönenfeld in 1924: he attacked the class justice of Weimar, he campaigned on behalf of the wrongly imprisoned Max

Hölz, and on behalf of Johannes R. Becher after that writer's arrest in 1925. He was active in the "Gruppe 1925" and in the "Schutzverband deutscher Schriftsteller." He concluded at the 1930 PEN Congress in Poland: "Jenseits von Politik und sozialen Fragen tagen zu wollen, ist eine Illusion." (GW I, p. 134). Therefore the politically engaged writer is not only the true revolutionary artist, but the only one who has recognised the illusory nature of 'pure' art, and done something about it; he is therefore the only truly moral artist, Toller would insist. In Kaiser's Noli me tangere, the abstract, unrealistic aspirations of the artist (Prisoner 15) are attacked by the Christ-figure, Prisoner 16. Prisoner 15 leaves the gaol a reformed character, conscious of his moral duty to humanity, aware that he had been wrong to distance himself from mankind. Here Kaiser approaches Toller's position, for the artist is shown to have a duty to reality and to society. But Kaiser fails to adhere to the humility of Noli me tangere; in 1921 he wrote to Blanche Dergan: "Was ich erlebe? - mich! Was heißt Dichter sein? - Mensch sein und von sich aussagen." (Briefe, p. 227 - my emphasis).

Kaiser's contradictory nature can only be fully grasped in the light of his letters and essays. While Toller's drama is reflected and supported by his non-fictional work, many of the concerns of Kaiser's plays are not substantiated in these writings, and are occasionally even directly contradicted. Interestingly, many of the assertions Toller makes in articles and essays are reflected in Kaiser's drama: the idea that crime has primarily social causes is evident in Noli me tangere and Der Silbersee, and the concept of universal guilt in Hölle Weg Erde parallels Toller's rejection of individual guilt. While Kaiser usually sees the masses as theatre audiences in his non-fictional writing,

rather than as an oppressed social class, the social conditioning which Toller pinpoints as a chief cause of working-class division often emerges in Kaiser's plays.

Toller's more political perception of his surroundings emerges most clearly from a comparison of the non-fictional writings, but it must be borne in mind that Kaiser did not back up his drama of the later Weimar years with a body of theoretical work: his essays were completed in the early 1920's. However, despite the discrepancies between the letters and essays of these writers, both see 'eternal problems' as a central concern of art, whilst simultaneously professing to want to have an effect on people and society via their art; both wish to see art as a form of propaganda, and yet insist that it must be more. Toller and Kaiser diverge again on the moral duty of the artist: Toller believes the artist must not only reject an ivory tower concept of art, but must be prepared to become involved in the socio-political problems around him, whereas Kaiser sees relentless creative production as the artist's first duty. Kaiser may see art as propagandistic, but does not, in the years before 1933, combine this idea with a Tolleresque notion of the politically involved artist. He is forced to rethink his position on morally sound art after the Nazi seizure of power: he approaches Toller's thinking during the years in exile on this question, just as he had on social and revolutionary problems during the Weimar period.

Notes.

1. Kaiser: Briefe (Valk, Gesa, ed.) Propyläen, Frankfurt a.M., Berlin & Vienna 1980, p. 102. (All page numbers refer to this edition, cited hereafter as Briefe).

2. In 1930, Kaiser also wrote the following, the irony of which is only fully apparent in the light of his letters to Bruno: "Allerdings wurden später meine pessimistischen Erwartungen übertroffen, als man jenen vierjährigen unflätigen Krieg exekutierte, dessen Ereignis noch dem Blindesten die Augen für die Unanständigkeit und den Stumpfsinn der menschlichen Gesellschaft öffnen mußte." (Werke IV, p. 604).

3. Kuxdorf, Manfred: Die Suche nach dem Menschen im Werke Georg Kaisers, p. 59.

4. Kauf, Robert: Faith and Despair in Georg Kaiser's Work, p. 127.

5. See GW IV, p. 53.

6. B.J. Kenworthy sees Hölle Weg Erde as representing a celebration of the birth of Weimar (Kenworthy: "Die Dramen 1928-1945: Apotheose der Subjektivität." In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 127), whereas Klaus Kändler equates the play with the November Revolution. (Kändler: "'Soll es ein anderer Mensch sein? Oder eine andere Welt?' Zur Vorgeschichte des sozialistischen Dramas der zwanziger Jahre." In: Weimarer Beiträge Sonderheft 2/68. Zum 50. Jahrestag der Novemberrevolution und der Gründung der KPD, p. 60). The play is clearly inspired by the Revolution, but the quotation from Kaiser's letters (Briefe, p. 159) puts the play in its true idealistic perspective.

7. Toller himself emphasises the modest aims of the social revolutionary: "Je mehr ich mich mit sozialen Problemen befaßte, je entschiedener ich Sozialist wurde, desto stärker erkannte ich die Grenzen aller Glücksmöglichkeiten, die durch individuelle und soziale Willenskraft erkämpft werden können. Der revolutionäre Dichter des 19. Jahrhunderts glaubte an das romantische Paradies auf Erden. [...] Solange wir nicht Blitz und Erdbeben, Feuersbrünste und Hagelschauer, Menschenbuckel und häßliche Gesichter, blinde Augen und krumme Seelen, Unfruchtbarkeit und Tod bezwingen können, sollten wir bescheidener werden." (GW I, pp. 139-140).

8. Toller was pronounced "unstreitbar nervenkrank" (Frühwald, Wolfgang & Spalek, John M., eds.: Der Fall

Toller. Kommentar und Materialien. Hanser, Munich & Vienna 1979, p. 79; cited hereafter as FT) by a Dr. Rüdin (whose name bears uncanny resemblance to the psychiatrist Professor Lüdin in Hoppla, wir leben!). At his trial Kaiser was also declared mentally unbalanced by Dr. Eugen Kahn, whose extensive interview with Kaiser is contained in an Ärztliches Gutachten of 12 January 1921, of which a typed copy is held in the GKA.

9. See Briefe, p. 1165: "Georg Kaisers Freundschaft zu Ernst Toller, der an der Münchner Räterepublik aktiv mitgewirkt hatte, stempelte ihn zu einem Kommunisten. Aussage der Zeugin Regina Arendt am 12. Oktober 1920: 'Ich weiß, daß Georg Kaiser ein hervorragender Kommunist ist. Sein bester Freund ist der Kommunistenführer Ludwig. Zu seinem Freundeskreis gehörten Toller, Landauer...' Gustav Kiepenheuer hatte ein Wiedergutmachungsangebot vorgeschlagen, das nicht akzeptiert wurde. Man verurteilte Kaiser hauptsächlich aus politischen Gründen, und der Verhandlungsort München spielte dabei eine wichtige Rolle."

10. Gerstl, Max: Die Münchner Räte-Republik. Verlag der Politischen Zeitfragen, Munich 1919, p. 63. Thus Kaiser took up a clear political position during the Munich Soviet. Though this would seem to be the extent of his involvement in the short-lived Republic, though he appears to have had little or nothing else to do with this "Aktionsausschuß revolutionärer Künstler," it is not quite true to say that Kaiser was not involved at all, as Klaus Petersen believes: "Seine Bekanntschaft mit Gustav Landauer und Ernst Toller brachten ihn mit sozialistischen Ideen in Berührung, jeder praktischen Beteiligung an der Bayrischen Räterepublik aber enthielt er sich." (Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 37).

11. See Briefe, p. 234: "Dies ist das Grab - und wenn vage Hoffnungen auf Auferstehung sich beschwingen, so bekommen sie ihren Auftrieb von Dir, die in meines Lebens Mitte wie ein Sternturm steht..."

12. GW V, p. 79 & pp. 96-97.

13. Toller writes in Briefe aus dem Gefängnis that the effects of prison on men's spirits are more horrifying than the walls and iron bars: "Drückender als die spitzesten Gitter sind die Höhlen seelischer Verödung und Leere." (GW V, p. 66).

14. Toller: "Aus der Festung Niederschönenfeld". In: Vorwärts, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 570, Morgen-Ausg., 3 December 1921, p. 2.

15. Niekisch, Ernst: Gewagtes Leben. Begegnungen und Begebnisse. Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Cologne & Berlin 1958, p. 101.

16. In 1922, Toller wrote to the blind poet Adolf von Hatzfeld: "Leben wir ein wesentlich anderes Leben als die Menschen, die wähnen, vollkommene Freiheit zu besitzen? Der Unterschied ist eine Nüance, nicht mehr. Immer ist das Chaos da, des Morgens, wenn wir aufstehen, des Abends, wenn wir ruhen wollen, immer müssen wir es von neuem überwältigen." (GW V, p. 89).

17. See GW V, p. 168 & 174.

18. Großmann, Stefan: [Reply to a letter from Toller]. In: Das Tagebuch, Vol. II, No. 46, 19 November 1921, p. 1399. The shock which Toller nevertheless did experience when released into Weimar society is expressed via the figure of Karl Thomas in Hoppla, wir leben!. While purely autobiographical interpretations can lead to misinterpretations of the play, parallels between Toller and his impetuous hero do undoubtedly exist.

19. Toller's visits to prison in America and Russia are recounted in Quer Durch, pp. 32-40 & pp. 128-145 respectively; the visits to Seville and Barcelona prisons, originally published in Die Weltbühne, are reprinted in GW I, pp. 251-258.

20. This is said quite directly in Quer Durch, p. 130.

21. Toller: "The Sexual Life of Prisoners". Introductory Essay in: Fishman, Joseph: Sex in Prison, John Lane, London 1935, p. 1.

22. Quer Durch, p. 143.

23. See for example Werke IV, p. 584, p. 595 & p. 608.

24. See for example the letters to Blanche Dergan (Briefe, p. 247) and Wilhelm Ripke (p. 266). Toller also believed in involving himself in the productions of his own plays: "Keinen Augenblick zweifle ich an der Bedeutsamkeit des Gegenstandes." (GW V, p. 99) he tells the editor of the Leipziger Tageblatt, referring to this matter. However, Toller was of course unable to participate in any productions until that of Hoppla!, as he was in prison when all the earlier works were premiered.

25. The Professor in Toller's Blinde Göttin rather cynically echoes what Kaiser despairs over here: "Angst und Hunger sind dem Menschen notwendig. Ohne Angst wird er zum Verbrecher, ohne Hunger zum Faulenzer." (Die Blinde Göttin, p. 60).

26. See for example Durzak, Manfred: Das expressionistische Drama II, pp. 143-148.

27. Toller believes he is qualified to make this statement because of his prison experience. As we have seen, Toller feels he has observed the worker 'naked': "Und gerade weil ich den nackten Proletarier gesehen habe, erkenne ich den gefährlichen Selbstbetrug der Schriftsteller, die proletarische Bildungsarbeit zu leisten meinen, indem sie 'O heiliger Proletarier, o göttlicher Prolet, du bist das Kind der Gerechtigkeit, der Liebe, der Reinheit' - rufen und unter heftigen Kotauen proletbyzantinisch sich gebärden." (GW V, pp. 181-182).

28. Both Toller and Kaiser signed a proclamation in the Berliner Tagespresse of 1 October 1925 entitled "Für die Freiheit in der Kunst," calling for an end to censorship. Toller certainly seems to have been more active within the "Gruppe 1925" - which arose from this proclamation - than Kaiser. Toller was often attacked by the dogmatic Marxist wing of the group, headed by Johannes R. Becher. For a detailed history of the group, see Petersen, Klaus: Die "Gruppe 1925". Geschichte und Soziologie einer Schriftstellervereinigung. Carl Winter, Universitätsverlag, Heidelberg 1981.

29. Klaus Petersen points out that many authoritative bodies in Kaiser's work are philistine and opposed to the artist-figure: the state in König Heinrich, the school in Der Fall des Schülers Vehgesack and the board of censors in Die Sorina. (Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 85).

30. A good example of this is Kaiser's answer to the question, "Welche neuen Stoffgebiete können das Theater befruchten? Verlangen diese Stoffe eine neue Form des Dramas und des Spiels?": "Das sind Fragen, die ich frühestens - bei anstrengendstem Nachdenken - erst Ostern 1942 beantworten kann." (Kaiser: "Das Theater von morgen." In: Berliner Börsen-Courier No. 151, 31 March 1929, 2. Beilage, p. 9). Toller's answer (p. 10) is altogether more serious, while Brecht's reply begins with what sounds like an admonishment of Kaiser's evasive attitude: "Schwierigkeiten werden nicht dadurch überwunden, daß sie verschwiegen werden." (p. 9). It is curious that Kaiser's reply to the

question raised by the Leipziger Tageblatt, lacking as it is in flippancy and cynicism, should have been omitted from Werke.

31. Kaiser: "Dichter auf der Probe. Eine Umfrage des Leipziger Tageblatts." In: Leipziger Tageblatt No. 90, 16 April 1922, 3. Beilage, n.p.

32. Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser, p. 103; Schürer: Georg Kaiser, p. 140; Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 43.

33. Toller: "Was glauben Sie, verlangt Ihr Publikum von Ihnen?" In: Berliner Börsen-Courier, Vol. LVIII, No. 603, 25 December 1925, pp. 21-22.

34. Ibid., p. 22.

35. Werke IV, p. 573. See also p. 590: "Begabung ist Gehorsam - Unterordnung - Demut, die werktätig sich darbietet. Stillstand bei einem Drama - Rückblick mit Genugtuung - Rast am Wege: sind Ungehorsam im Geiste, der mit tödlichem Fluch belädt."

36. See GW I, p. 137 & GW IV, p. 88.

37. Kändler: Drama und Klassenkampf, pp. 296-297.

38. Hans Marnette judges Toller's work according to the criteria of socialist realism; he attacks Hoppla, wir leben!, for example, because he feels it lacks 'historical optimism'. (Marnette: Untersuchungen zum Inhalt-Form-Problem in Ernst Tollers Dramen, p. 312). In the light of Marxist criticism of earlier plays, in which Toller's work is seen as too emotional and naive (see for example Reso's article, "Die Novemberrevolution und Ernst Toller"), attacks on later, more realistic plays appear particularly ironic.

39. Wolff: Briefwechsel eines Verlegers 1911-1963, pp. 325-326.

40. Becher, Johannes R.: Vorwärts, du Rote Front! Prosastücke. Taifun, Frankfurt a. M. 1924, p. 7.

41. Kändler, Klaus: "Georg Kaiser - der Dramatiker des neuen Menschen". In: Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl Marx Universität Leipzig. Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe, Vol. VII, 1957/58, p. 303.

42. Toller: "Zur Volksbühnenkrise." In: Vorwärts, Vol. XLIV, No. 178, Morgen-Ausg., 15 April 1927, p. 2. Toller deals with much the same idea in "Rede auf

der Volksbühnentagung in Magdeburg." In: Das Tagebuch, Vol. VIII, No. 27, 2 July 1927, pp. 1074-1078.

43. It is precisely this form of bias which Clair Hayden Bell employs in her article comparing Die Maschinenstürmer to Hauptmann's Die Weber. Hayden Bell concludes that Die Weber is the better play, as she believes it to be a "pure work of art, unburdened by preachment or teachment." (Hayden Bell, Clair: "Toller's Die Maschinenstürmer". In: Monatshefte für deutschen Unterricht, Vol. XXX, No. 2, February 1928, p. 65). Hauptmann himself believed Die Weber was not a tendentious play; when he told Toller this, the latter was disappointed that the great Naturalist playwright's sympathy for the oppressed did not extend to solidarity with their revolutionary aspirations. (FT, pp. 134-135). Francis P. Andersen's assertion that Toller's work is "preaching" (Andersen: An Analytical Study of the Techniques of Persuasion in the Plays of Ernst Toller, p. 186), and the many uncomprehending early critical evaluations of Toller (see Introduction above) show that Toller countered not only his contemporary critics with his ideas on bias, but also, pre-emptively, some of his first academic reception.

44. This quotation is a further example of Kaiser's unorthodox understanding of Expressionism.

45. This faith is also expressed in the essay "Mythos" (1919): "Mächtig schafft Mythos im Sinnbild - und im kleinsten Ding des Splitters eines Dorns, den er aus Wurzel in den Weltball gestoßen zum Riesenschattenbaum des Weltalls erhebt, beweist er seine schöpferische Macht - die Menschenmacht ist, wenn sich der Mensch entscheidet: im Geringsten das Unendliche auszudenken." (Werke IV, p. 556).

46. Essays in which Kaiser propagates the idea of eternal values in art are: "Ein Dichtwerk in der Zeit," "Ein neuer Naturalismus?," "Die Krise des Theaters", and "Historientreue".

47. See GW I, p. 142.

48. Kändler, Klaus: "'Die Sinnlichkeit des Gedankens'. Zur Dramaturgie Georg Kaisers". In: Weimarer Beiträge, Vol. XXIV, No. 9, 1978, p. 21.

49. Huder, Walter: "Nachwort". In: Werke V, p. 818. Klaus Petersen, however, also believes that Donat is a fraud, and sees Kaiser as questioning his artistic vocation in Hete Donat. (Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 83).

50. See for example, Toller & Mühr, Alfred: National-sozialismus. Eine Diskussion über den Kulturbankrott des Bürgertums, p. 14.

51. Toller: "Rede auf der Volksbühnentagung in Magdeburg", p. 1077.

52. Toller: "An die Dichter". In: Das Kunstblatt, Vol. VIII, No. 11, 1924. Photocopy held in Sammlung Ernst Toller, Berlin.

53. Toller: "Ein Wort für Finkelnburg". In: Die Justiz. Monatsschrift für Erneuerung des deutschen Rechtswesens. Vol. V, No. 6, March 1930, p. 366.

54. See for example, Toller: "Die Angst der Kreatur". In: Berliner Tagesblatt, Vol. LVI, No. 167, Abend-Ausg., pp. 2-3; Toller: "Rede in Budapest." In: Die Weltbühne, Vol. XXVIII, No. 23, 7 June 1932, p. 854. P. Walter Jacob also quotes a speech Toller gave in 1928 which elaborates on the moral and political duties of the artist. (Jacob, P. Walter: "Der Dramatiker Ernst Toller". In: Rampenlicht. Köpfe der Literatur und des Theaters. (Editorial Cosmopolita, Buenos Aires 1945, p. 33.)

55. Toller: "Rückblick". Photocopy held in Sammlung Ernst Toller: probably dates from late 1928 or early 1929.

SECTION TWO

THE POLITICAL CHALLENGE OF NAZISM

Introduction

As a Jew and a socialist, Toller was a far more obvious target for Nazi repression than Kaiser, although the latter was labelled a Kulturbolschewist and was prevented from staging or publishing his works. Nevertheless, Toller's - rather fortunate - escape into immediate foreign exile meant his post-1933 work was always uncompromisingly anti-fascist, whereas Kaiser's work of this period cannot be said to be consistently so. This oeuvre can be divided broadly into two parts: that of the years 1933-1938, which Kaiser spent in Germany, and that of the years 1938-1945, when he lived under stressful, uncomfortable conditions in Switzerland. As we have seen, Toller was well aware of the rising Nazi threat from the beginning of the Weimar Republic; Kaiser's dramatic work of the late Twenties also mirrors the rise of fascism. However, we have also seen that Kaiser's greater distance from the immediate political events of his time ensured that there is no trace of the concerns evident in Die Lederköpfe or Ächtung des Kriegers in his letters from this period. Immediately after 1933, this trend is reversed: while Kaiser's letters reflect his frustration with the new regime, his plays do not. Toller shifted his attention almost entirely to the fight against fascism, which he perceived as a European phenomenon, after the Nazi seizure of power. He largely sacrificed his artistic calling to concentrate on the battle against a regime under which a large section of the German population suffered. Kaiser, on the other hand, found himself a part of this large minority which Toller tried constantly to remind the world about. Yet Kaiser's position in Nazi Germany, while certainly uncomfortable, was not unbearable. Banned

from the stage and publishing houses, his financial worries were constant, but unlike Toller (who was to be arrested immediately after the burning of the Reichstag in February 1933, and who escaped because he happened to be in Switzerland), he was not threatened with arrest until 1938, when, warned of the Gestapo's plans, he was able to flee. Initially, Kaiser's resistance to Nazism was non-existent; robbed of an income, he poured his energies into reclusive works like Alain und Elise (1937) or Der Gärtner von Toulouse (1937-1938), politically inoffensive entertainments, such as Der Schuß in die Öffentlichkeit (1938), or even drama which presented right-wing ideals in a positive light, as they are in Das Los des Ossian Balvesen (1934). Ironically, Kaiser was to find that he himself, rather than his works, was banned by the Nazis and that any play, no matter how inoffensive to Germany's new rulers, was not to be staged. With this realisation, Kaiser's work became increasingly introspective during these years of 'inner exile', but also, with the clandestine distribution of anti-Nazi poems among workers, more uncompromising and agitational. Once out of Germany, Kaiser's opposition to Nazism became a prominent feature of his drama. This section will examine Toller's and Kaiser's response to National Socialism. The ways in which they believed the Nazi threat should be challenged will form the basis for discussion in Chapter IV. Chapter V will investigate the portrayal of Nazism in their works and the ideological development of their thinking and writing over these years.

Chapter IV

NAZISM AND HOW IT IS TO BE COUNTERED

The Moral Obligations of the Artist and "Die Gewalt der Idee".

In Chapter III we saw that Toller's concept of the moral artist involved a political commitment which was to be reflected not only in his art, but in his willingness to turn away from creative, imaginative work and to become involved in the problems of the day. This concept is mirrored by Toller's behaviour after the Nazi seizure of power. He wrote only two plays,¹ Nie wieder Friede! (1934-36) and Pastor Hall (1938), and published Eine Jugend in Deutschland (1933) and Briefe aus dem Gefängnis (1935), but was active in the PEN Club (he was a co-founder of the German PEN Club in Exile) and undertook lecture tours. Toller was also active on behalf of other writers, who, banned by the Nazis, found themselves without means. He advised the American Guild for German Cultural Freedom on bursaries for exiled writers including Walter Mehring, Bodo Uhse, John Heartfield and many others. One such scholarship recipient was Georg Kaiser,² who received some financial help when he fled Germany for Switzerland via Holland. Toller took part in the Legal Commission of Inquiry into the Burning of the Reichstag, held in September 1933 in London, but his greatest non-literary undertaking was without doubt his Spanish Relief Project (1938-39), designed to raise funds for the starving on both sides of the Spanish Civil War. Tragically, the Project could not be completed before Franco's victory. Toller was also responsible for a number of speeches and articles

which drew attention to the true barbarity of Nazism, and pleaded for decisive political action against Hitler by the Western democracies. In these writings, pacifism is strongly rejected in favour of what Toller perceived to be a necessary and - as it indeed turned out to be - inevitable conflict. Their tone is far from resigned; in general, they proclaim the eventual triumph of the 'moral idea' over the violence of dictatorship. As far as Kaiser is concerned, he too keeps to his idea of what constitutes the morally defensible artist. His artistic output certainly shows no sign of slowing down during the exile years, even though it was barred from publication in Germany. Initially, Kaiser was concerned with securing an income, and attempted to get work published, but by the mid-Thirties he realised that he had no hope of doing this in Germany until the regime was replaced. And yet even during these years Kaiser's hatred of inertia and complacency, his single-minded pursuit of artistic production drove him to write plays. Thus we can see that while both Toller and Kaiser remain true to their separate convictions about the moral artist, they in fact violate the principles of the other in this matter. Kaiser fails to follow up the anti-fascist tone of Die Lederköpfe in his plays until he is safely abroad, and Toller fails to pursue the artist's mission - as perceived by Kaiser - of unrelenting creative production. (The sole exception to this trend is Kaiser's series of agitational poems, Die Gasgesellschaft). However, while he fulfils the stipulations he had set himself in the Twenties, we shall see that Kaiser begins to show signs of being unhappy with this apolitical pursuit of creative production. As mentioned above, Toller was active on behalf of German writers during his years in exile. It is perhaps a little ironic that Toller concentrates on calling

the fate of the artist under the Nazis to the world's attention; ironic, because his political work thus focuses on art and the artist. Of course it is not surprising that Toller drew attention to the plight of German artists in the PEN Club, an international association of authors. At the Edinburgh conference of this association in 1934, he said himself that as a writer he felt responsible first and foremost for other writers, but he is fully aware of the plight of thousands of Communist workers and Jews: in an attempt to clarify the extent of Nazi repression to his foreign colleagues, he alludes to the sorry situation of all non-Nazis. Obviously, Toller felt a need to defend the artist's freedom because he himself was a writer, but he also saw the broad cultural threat posed by Nazism, which was inextricably linked to the political threat. Toller, in other words, does not dwell on his own fate. Kaiser also sees Nazism as the barbaric enemy of culture, but often describes this concept chiefly in personal terms:

Von Georg Kaiser - dem früheren Mitglied der Akademie und hochgeehrten Dramatiker, über den man Bücher schrieb - ist nur ein Schatten übrig. So vollständig ist der Sieg der Nazis, die uns alle überwunden haben und in den Kot gestoßen. (Briefe, p. 999).

Kaiser's response to Nazism and the Second World War is often affected by personal bitterness - bitterness which also colours the plays Klawitter and Der englische Sender. Kaiser's often rather pessimistic outlook bred in him a desire to isolate himself from a humanity which seemed to be plumbing new depths. This causes him to take up a somewhat egotistical position. In October 1939, when the War was barely two months old, he wrote to Caesar von Arx: "Wir müssen in das Berner Oberland ziehen und auf den entstehenden Blutsumpf

zu unseren Füßen herabsehen. Schaudernd - aber gerettet." (Briefe, p. 471). When in a more optimistic mood, Kaiser is prone to regard the War as an irritating obstacle to his career (Briefe, p. 923), and he is personally offended by the American decision not to grant him an entry visa (Briefe, p. 1009). However, it would be unfair to accuse Kaiser of cutting himself off completely: even though Pygmalion shows he desired isolation in the final years of his life, many plays written during the first five years he spent in Switzerland confront the horror of war and often attempt to tackle its causes. Despite his personal responses to events, he is not an ignorant aesthete; as Toller had felt in prison, his isolation only serves to heighten his sensitivity to the horrors outside:

CAESAR, es ist ein Krieg, der Frauen und Kinder in ihren Wiegen erschlägt. Wahllos wird vernichtet. Wahllos wird verfolgt und erschlagen. [...] Ist hier kein Schlachtfeld, wo ich bin? Ich wollte dem Schlachtfeld entgehen und emigrierte. Aber es war keine Rettung - es wurde die tiefere Verstrickung und ein schlimmer Tod - der, den man in der Einsamkeit stirbt. Er erfordert die größte Kraft. Habe ich sie? (Briefe, p. 707).

In the speech delivered at the 1933 PEN Congress at Ragusa, Toller substantiates his claims about the persecution of other German writers, by listing many of the other authors whose works were publicly burned. (GW I, p. 170). Even in this speech, which attacks primarily the suppression of freedom of thought, Toller makes a point of conceding that others had suffered far worse a fate than exiled writers:

Ich spreche nicht von meinem privaten Schicksal, nicht vom privaten Schicksal all jener, die heute im Exil leben müssen. Es ist hart genug. Das Land, in dem sie geboren sind, dürfen sie nicht wiedersehen, sie sind vertrieben, verjagt, verstoßen.

Aber andre haben Schwereres erlitten. (GW I, p. 172).

By citing several examples of Nazi pressure on foreign governments to comply with German cultural policy, Toller tries to impress the far-reaching nature of Nazi power upon other delegates. Toller's attacks the following year on the Nazis at the PEN Congress in Edinburgh are also an accusation of the apolitical artist, and there is a note of impatience in his challenge to the delegates:

Von Ihnen wird nicht der Flammentod verlangt, von Ihnen wird nur gefordert, daß Sie um der guten, humanen und gerechten Sache willen, um jener Sache, der trotz aller gegenwärtigen Verfinsterung eine künftige Menschheit sich zuwenden wird, sich solidarisch mit ungerecht Verfolgten erklären und die Bedrückung des Geistes und den Ungeist nicht dulden. (GW I, p. 178).

Nazism and its impact on artists and writers naturally brought an intense relevance to Toller's concept of the moral, socially-aware artist.

Although The Scotsman reports on Toller's sympathetic reception at the Edinburgh Congress, an editorial appearing in the edition of 21 June 1934, highlights the attitudes Toller was up against. While this editorial concedes that the line dividing politics and art is a fine one, and that "it was natural and proper enough that a Congress of writers should demand freedom of speech," it goes on to say that the Congress "overstepped the line when Herr Toller introduced a motion condemning the German Government."³ The article also attacks Emil Ludwig, whose plans for setting up a 'court' of writers who would come together to condemn war if it were to break out, are dismissed outright.⁴ While these plans do admittedly sound somewhat fantastic,

Toller supported them because he believed Ludwig's motion showed a more material, less sentimental approach to the causes of war. The article owes its tone to the prevalent view of the detached, apolitical artist. The outright condemnation of a state - the alleged crimes of which the paper accepts as fact - by writers is deemed improper; as long as writers keep their discussion limited to what is perceived to affect them and their work, they and their Congress are seen in a favourable light. Hitler at least has some sort of legitimate claim to the title of 'serious politician' the article implies: "Even Herr Hitler has his experts, but Herr Ludwig threatens us with a worse dictatorship - a dictatorship based on what writers instinctively feel."⁵

Members of the official German PEN Club, i.e. writers of whom the Nazis approved, also pleaded to keep politics out of the writers' Congresses. As Toller pointed out at the 1933 Ragusa Congress, the Nazi delegation was guilty of the crudest hypocrisy: "Die Herren des deutschen Pen-Klubs haben sich gestern dagegen gewehrt, daß im Pen-Klub politische Fragen erörtert werden. Wenn sie Schriftsteller aus Gesinnungsgründen ausschließen, sind sie es, die Politik in den Pen-Klub tragen." (GW I, p. 170). Toller's pleas to the international community of artists to take a stand in the name of human rights, go hand in hand with his belief in the long-term victory of ideas proclaimed in artistic works over political repression, as we shall see. At Edinburgh Toller perceived a sense of impotence in the PEN Club, a feeling he believes to be responsible for the organisation's lack of political resolve: "Werden Sie diese Bedrohung dulden? Sie werden mir antworten: 'was sollen wir tun, wir sind zu schwach.' Unsere Stimme wird nicht gehört." (GW I, p. 177).

Toller concludes that in demanding a statement of solidarity for their oppressed colleagues, not much is being asked of the authors' association (GW I, p. 178, quoted above), but he is not able to answer the question of the PEN Club's effectiveness. At any rate, Toller does not appear to believe the PEN Club to be ineffective, at least potentially, for he uses it as a forum to prick the world's conscience. Far more decisive for Toller is the lack of unity among writers. On the events at the Ragusa Congress,⁶ Toller comments: "Hundert Bauern, wenn sie zusammensitzen und über ihre Interessen sprechen, wissen, worum es geht, und keine Macht ist im Stande, sie vom Wesentlichen abzubringen. Schriftsteller, wenn sie in Haufen zusammenkommen, scheinen ihre Urteilskraft zu verlieren." (GW I, p. 279). Toller thus portrays the inability of the PEN Club to condemn specific violations of human freedom as an important source of the organisation's impotence.

Although Kaiser was naturally concerned not to endanger his family, it can nevertheless be said that he pandered to Nazism and underestimated it in a way that Toller never did. Kaiser's letters from the years 1933-38 rarely condemn the far-reaching barbarity of Nazism; rather there is a tendency to bemoan the state of the arts and in particular the inconvenience of being banned. By contrast, Toller consistently draws attention to the plight of other writers and does not accept any excuses for being unaware of what is happening in Germany. (GW I, p. 174). Only in his Swiss exile - and with the outbreak of the Second World War does Kaiser really begin to attack "die faschistische Pest." (Werke IV, p. 611). The first sign of Kaiser's underestimation of the rigidity of Nazi ideology is his belief that he could get a play published as long as it caused no offence to that ideology. This is clearly the

motivation behind Das Los des Ossian Balvesen. While most critics compare the lottery/sudden wealth theme to that of David und Goliath and Der mutige Seefahrer, and contrast this with Kaiser's own difficulties with money,⁷ only Klaus Petersen recognises the pettyⁿbourgeois nature of the values propagated in this play by the 'artist' Glynn.⁸ However, as Petersen concentrates on the artist figures in Kaiser's plays, he does not evaluate the character of Ossian himself. While Glynn's meritocratic, modest, yet thoroughly reactionary view of art certainly influences Ossian's decision to destroy the lottery ticket, the latter is in any case an unadventurous type who rejects the exotic in favour of that which he knows; of sea-travel he says, for example: "Wo das Land aufhört, fängt das Ungewisse an." (Werke VI, p. 13). Although Glynn advocates a life close to nature and away from commercial pressure (Werke VI, p. 60), he considers it important to have an occupation, no matter how modest, which earns a living. He describes his own art - carving puppets - thus: "Jetzt ist das mein Tun, das ich mit tiefem Ernst betreibe. Denn es ernährt mich. Davon geht was aus. Von seiner Hände Werk sich zu erhalten." (Werke VI, p. 37). This position can be understood as a piece of self-admonishment by Kaiser, a retraction of the idea of the superior artist - whose duty it is to change man - so well publicised at his trial. But Glynn is still a very influential figure, in that Ossian is persuaded to remain the seemingly insignificant member of society he had always been. Glynn's role is to show Ossian the heroic nature of his work as a post-office clerk: work which Kaiser had previously portrayed as drab and soul-destroying in Von morgens bis mitternachts and Kanzlist Krehler. Ossian thus speaks of his discovery of an insignificant error in the accounts in the ecstatic

language we often find in Kaiser's work, but which is usually not used to laud the banal:

Das ist ein Sieg. Es hämmern meine Pulse.
Das breitet sich in meiner Brust aus. Als
wüchse ich hinauf - die Luft ist dünner
und weißer um mich. Ein Feldherr muß so
fühlen, der seine Schlacht siegreich ge-
schlagen. Napoleon. Der Held zu Pferd
auf einem Hügel und überblickt das Schlacht-
feld. Da siegt er. Meine Art zu siegen
spielt sich nur anders ab. Doch das Ergebnis
ist das gleiche: Triumph und Stolz und
Unvergleichlichkeit des Daseins! (Werke
VI, p. 46).

As in other Kaiser plays, wealth is portrayed negatively - Sven's and Svea's relationship is threatened by it, Wilas is its cold and lifeless representative - but the world which replaces this false god is a petty bourgeois, kitsch-laden idyll. The post office staff's rendering of Beethoven appears ridiculous, and Tillberg's inaugural speech contains the only positive appraisal of the state in all of Kaiser's work: "Es ist nicht ihr Geld - es ist des Staates Geld. Der Staat kann nicht vergeuden. Das Notwendige in Einklang bringen mit dem Möglichen - wer weiß es besser als Sie, Kollege Balvesen?" (Werke VI, p. 75).

However, it must be emphasised that - with the possible exception of Pferdewechsel (1938) - Ossian Balvesen stands alone in Kaiser's work in its blatant propagation of right-wing values. Kaiser's letters show that he wanted to get his work published and performed under a pseudonym, which is precisely what makes Ernst Hoff a morally dubious character in Klawitter (1939-40), as we shall see. In 1935, when even Ossian Balvesen was banned, he wrote to Richard Revy:

Das Stückwerk war gut - aber es war von mir. Es wurde also nicht aufgeführt. Da sagte einer der Theaterleute jammernd zu mir: warum haben Sie nicht Ihren Namen

verschwiegen und August Schulze hingesezt. Man hätte den Schulze gespielt - den Kaiser spielt man nicht. Nun will ich den Schulze schreiben lassen - die neue Komödie, die ich entworfen habe. (Briefe, p. 285)

Kaiser himself felt somewhat guilty at having to pander to the authorities in this way: "Diesmal bin ich klüger als die andern - was kein Triumph ist, eher eine Blamage." (Briefe, p. 287).

Toller's position on the morality of the artist does not change during the exile years. The rejection of the tranquillity of classical form, established in essays like "Arbeiten" and "Bemerkungen zum deutschen Nachkriegsdrama", is reiterated in his writings of the Thirties. Shortly after his banishment from Germany, Toller lived in Britain for a while, and took the opportunity to publicise his views there on the role of the responsible writer. Just as he had done in the Twenties, Toller continues to insist on a modern form of writing in order to reflect accurately the chaos of modern times. In his piece, "The Modern Writer and the Future of Europe" (1934), Toller rejects the notion of art for art's sake: "There were times when a line was drawn between an artistic and a human mission. But the young generation will have none of this demarcation. [...] In other words, the moral conception of writing has for them once again assumed a central significance."⁹ We shall see that Kaiser sometimes endorses this "moral conception of writing", and at other times becomes disillusioned with the apparent absence of art's impact upon the world, claiming that his writing is purely for himself. Toller, however, sees the converse of morally involved art not just as art for art's sake, but as something more sinister. He insists that it is, in fact, just as political

and just as biased as proletarian and 'tendentious' art is from the bourgeois point of view. The patronisation of art by the ruling classes necessarily led to banality, to mere entertainments, designed to titillate the oppressors and distract the oppressed, Toller believes:

Die Wenigen hielten sich für Pächter der Kunst. Sie bezahlten sie ja, und so sah denn ihre Kunst auch aus. In ihren Theatern wurde die furchtbare Geschichte der Menschheit umgedeutet zu nichtssagenden Niedlichkeiten, aus den großen sozialen und religiösen Kämpfen wurden flüchtige Episoden schwadronierender und eifersüchtiger Dummköpfe, deren einziger Reiz die wechselnde modisch-altertümliche Kleidung war, aus dem Drama menschlicher Leidenschaften wurde die wahrhaft interessante Frage, welche Frau welchen Mann betrügt. Betrogene Betrüger waren sie alle, Dichter und Publikum, Theaterdirektoren und Schauspieler. (GW I, pp. 149-150).

As in the years before 1933,¹⁰ Toller is willing to acknowledge the importance of beauty - "Ergo sumus Arcadia - auch wir lieben die Schönheit, die blauen Meere und die weiten Himmel, die Sterne und die Gezeiten," (GW I, p. 197) - but he believes the modern artist to be motivated by social misery rather than beauty: "Wir wissen, daß uns nicht so sehr die Schönheit bewegt wie die Not." (GW I, p. 191).

Perhaps somewhat perversely, Toller does see his concept of moral, politically-motivated art bearing fruit with the Nazi seizure of power. In an open letter to Goebbels, Toller defiantly claims: "Die Verfolgungen und Ächtungen sind für uns Verfolgte eine große Ehrung, mancher von uns wird jetzt erst beweisen müssen, daß er diese Ehrung verdient." (GW I, pp. 76-77). The second half of this sentence is aimed at those writers whose works were branded as 'un-German' and burned, but which were not necessarily a contribution to the

fighting art Toller advocates: Kaiser could be seen as one of the writers being addressed here.¹¹

While Kaiser sways between endorsement and absolute condemnation of art's validity during these years in exile, Toller never ceases to laud its long-term value in the face of repression. Many of Toller's articles and speeches of the exile years are devoted to reminding the world of an invisible Germany: that of the great artists and thinkers. Toller became aware of the more idealistic Germany - what Romain Rolland refers to as "la meilleure Allemagne"¹² very early. In 1923 he wrote to the actor Max Pallenberg: "Das Deutsche an Goethe, an Hölderlin, an Büchner (um nur ein paar aus der Schar der Großen zu nennen), was hat es gemeinsam mit dem Teutschen an Ruge etwa, an Theodor Fritsch, an Adolf Hitler?"¹³ (GW V, p. 154). In acting as a mouthpiece for this silent Germany, Toller not only accuses the Nazi regime of barbaric treatment of artists, writers and intellectuals, but continuously stresses the power of ideas which threaten, and which he believes would eventually destroy, that regime. The very fact that the Nazis deem such violent repression necessary, is sufficient proof of the power of art, Toller believes: "Die wachsende Verfolgung geistiger Werke in unserer Zeit zeigt, daß die Diktatoren die Macht des Wortes, den moralischen Charakter der Kunst begriffen haben - und fürchten." (GW I, p. 149) Art is ultimately stronger than physical repression, Toller feels: "Jenseits der Grenzen sind sie ohnmächtig, jenseits der Grenzen rettet und bewahrt sich die Macht des Wortes, die am Ende stärker ist als sie und sie überdauern wird."¹⁴ (GW I, p. 150). However, Toller knew that even the work of the exiled community of writers was under attack from Berlin: "Die Diktatur begnügt sich nicht mit der Verfolgung von Schriftstellern

und der Unterdrückung ihrer Bücher im Lande, sie verfolgt auch die vor der Gewalt Entflohenen im Auslande".¹⁵

(GW I, p. 175). Kaiser was to find out how foreign pressure could interfere with the staging of his work when the Zürich Schauspielhaus decided to remove Der Soldat Tanaka from the programme after the Japanese Embassy protested. In the early Twenties Toller had written to Henri Barbusse: "Aber der Sozialismus ist nicht besiegt. Man kann die Revolutionäre in Gefängnisse sperren, ist damit die Idee tot, für die sie kämpften?" (GW V, p. 102). By the 1930's Toller has applied this idea to the alternative values propagated through art, and he offers encouragement to writers like Kaiser, who have come to doubt the validity of their work:

Ich kenne nur zu gut die Verzweiflung des Dichters, der in solcher Welt lebend, fragt: Was hat meine Arbeit für einen Sinn? Wozu Gedichte schreiben, wozu Romane, wozu Dramen? Wer will von ihnen wissen? Für die Herrschenden hat ein neuer Tank, ein neues Giftgas tausendmal höheren Wert als ein großes Kunstwerk. Aber wer so spricht, ist kurzsichtig, Tatsachen triumphieren eine kurze Zeit, am Ende sind sie ohnmächtig vor der Gewalt der Idee.¹⁶
(GW I, p. 193).

As we shall see, Kaiser's own faith in art as a weapon against tyranny was shaky, but Toller exhibits no such doubts publicly; he clings to his faith in the power of art. As a very young man he had demanded - in his "Leitsätze für einen kulturpolitischen Bund der Jugend in Deutschland" - wide distribution of "neuere Dichtungen von Menschheitsgestalt" (GW I, p. 33), which meant literature propagating alternative values such as internationalism and pacifism. In 1929 he had stressed the educational worth of Erich Maria Remarque's powerful anti-war novel, Im Westen nichts Neues:

Dieses Buch sollte in Millionen Exemplaren verbreitet, übersetzt, in den Schulen gelesen, von allen den Krieg bekämpfenden Gruppen gekauft und verschenkt werden. Es sagt mehr über das Volk und seinen Anteil am Krieg aus als dickleibige historische Wälzer und Statistiken. (GW I, p. 120).

In 1934-35 Toller admitted, however, that anti-war books and films had backfired; their messages became submerged in the exciting stories with which they were inevitably combined: "Am Ende war fast jedes Anti-Kriegsbuch, trotzdem es von seinen Gegnern verfolgt und beschimpft wurde, eine Stärkung des Kriegsgedankens, weil die Friedensidee ein bloßer Schatten blieb, und die Kriegsidee die Wirklichkeit durchdrang." (GW I, p. 186). In other words, the moral idea spread through art was in this instance not enough. Establishment propaganda would seem invincible if it could even succeed in making war seem attractive and exciting in an anti-war novel. However, as Toller is attacking pacifists' lack of resolve in the inter-war years here, he does not reject the principle of "die Gewalt der Idee"; instead, he goes on to say that the enemies of war should have gone on to the offensive with clearer, more aggressively-formulated alternative ideas. "Der Geist ist am Ende stärker als das Schwert," (GW III, p. 190) is the conclusion even Napoleon had come to in his memoirs, as St. Francis points out in Nie wieder Friede! Though this play comes to no real conclusion on this question, the power of the idea is certainly what gives Friedrich Hall the courage for his act of self-sacrifice. In Pastor Hall, Toller has the socialist character Peter Hofer recount the true fate of Erich Mühsam, whose defiant stand against the Nazis cost him his life; the account strengthens Hall's resolve, which had been weakened by the harshness of the concentration camp. (GW III, p. 291). There

is however, a certain irony in Toller's optimistic view of art's capability to effect change, for this idea stands somewhat at odds with his belief that artistic production was not enough, especially in times of political crisis. Ferdinand Bruckner recalls Toller privately complaining about art's limitations in the fight against Hitler:

Wie oft hörte ich dich in London darüber klagen, daß unsre Bücher, Theaterstücke und Kampfschriften gegen ihn so wenig auszurichten vermochten. Du sagtest, man müßte einen Weg finden, ihm anders beizukommen. Ich wußte keinen, du aber fandst ihn bald danach. (FT, p. 231).

Toller clearly felt he had to encourage publicly all opposition to fascism, no matter how ineffective it appeared to be in the short term.

Kaiser is faced with a moral crisis during these pre-war years. On the one hand he fulfils his own stipulations on fighting laziness and complacency, on the other he needs an audience - in order to live and also because he feels he ought to be helping to push for change. Yet parallel to this nagging feeling run doubts about the possible effectiveness of the artist in the face of such overwhelming odds. Klaus Petersen, in discussing the validity of Julius Marx' book, Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen, claims that Marx' memory is to be doubted by the scholar, as the sweeping statements about the useless, even immoral, nature of art Marx attributes to Kaiser are not mirrored in any of Kaiser's letters of the time.¹⁷ While this may be the case with the letters Kaiser wrote while in Switzerland, it is certainly not true of those letters written during the years of 'inner exile'. In 1936 Kaiser noted in a letter to Richard Revy:

Gestern hat es soviel geregnet, daß man einen ganzen Akt hätte schreiben können. Ohne Regen keine Kunst. Die Sonne ist aller Künste Untergang. Folglich ist Kunst eine Krankheit. Was ich schon lange wußte. Eine Schlechtwetterangelegenheit. Wenn die Langweile meutert. Gesund und normal ist unsre Sache also auf keinen Fall. (Briefe, p. 310).

A year later he claimed: "Im Grunde habe ich immer das Theater gehaßt." (Briefe, p. 333). Art has succeeded only in isolating him:

Ich wäre jetzt großer Handelsmann in Magdeburg - Mitglied der Partei - Aufsichtsratsmitglied des städtischen Kloakenwesens u.s.w. Also ein vollkommener Zeitgenosse. So aber bin ich ein Wegläufer - ein Voreiler - ein Allesundnichts. (Briefe, p. 288).

Such bitter, sarcastic remarks are accompanied by genuine doubt as to the validity of the artist's work: "Aber was ist nicht sinnlos, was der Dichter tut." (Briefe, p. 293). Yet these doubts interchange with an equally genuine conviction that art must serve as a beacon amidst chaotic times: "Das konsequente Drama muß geschrieben werden. Die unerbittliche Dramatik ist notwendig. Inmitten aller Laschheit - Lauheit - Feigheit." (Briefe, p. 341). It is particularly revealing that Kaiser pinpoints cowardice as a characteristic of the times, for he is no doubt attacking his own lack of decisiveness in the face of Nazism.¹⁸ However, it is somewhat ironic that Kaiser is referring specifically to his play Der Gärtner von Toulouse (1937-38) here, a work which mirrors Kaiser's feeling of isolation, and betrays a wish to retreat from reality rather than face it.

As already stated above, Ossian Balvesen is Kaiser's only play which attempts to avoid Nazi censorship by blatantly propagating right-wing values, with the

possible exception of Pferdewechsel. This play has always been regarded by critics as very personal; Napoleon, portrayed sympathetically and shown to be filled with self-doubt while on his way into exile on Elba, has been taken to be a representative of Kaiser himself.¹⁹ While these interpretations are no doubt valid, and the parallels between Kaiser's and Napoleon's isolation, disenchantment and approaching banishment abroad are obvious, it is nevertheless curious that Kaiser should choose a militaristic leader to represent himself. The same figure, no matter what his virtues, is derided in Napoleon in New Orleans (1937-41) as a leader who inspires, in Baron Dergan, not moral progress, but slavish devotion to outmoded and dangerous 'traditional values'. Interestingly, the alternative values are represented by petty opportunists in both plays, but while Youyou is able to impersonate Napoleon so easily because the dictatorship of the latter is upheld by such base things as murder, hate and envy, Lablache cannot hope to aspire to the greatness of Marie's husband Gaspard, who fell in active service. To Lablache, Napoleon is "Der Fürst der Affen - satt und gut and rasch vergessend, was in der Erde faulte von seinen Schlachten!" (Werke VI, p. 242). However, Lablache, whilst an anti-militarist, is motivated chiefly by his desire to seduce Marie. His lack of respect for France's former Emperor, and for those who died under his leadership is cynical, and in no way positive. Ironically, though, it is the fact that Dergan is exploited by similarly cynical crooks that exposes his erroneous ideals in Napoleon in New Orleans. Marie portrays her husband as a selfless being who would willingly give up bourgeois comfort, his wife and his home to serve a greater glory. (Werke VI, p. 275). While Marie laments the fact that greatness is now measured in money (p. 260), and as such confirms

the anti-materialist leaning of much of Kaiser's other work, she stands alone in his oeuvre in her admiration of her husband's militaristic obedience and discipline:

Denn er redete von seinem Kaiser so, daß
man zuerst mit Leib und Seele ihm gehöre.
Nach dem Gesetz, das keiner buchstabiert
- und wortlos ihm vereidigt bis zum Tode.
Wer das nicht fühlt, der soll auch sonst
nichts gelten: im Hause nicht - im Hofe
nicht - bei seinem eigenen Weibe nicht!
(Werke VI, pp. 240-241).

If applied to Kaiser's ideal of the artist who obeys his calling with single-minded devotion, and who, as Kaiser had publicly stated in his trial in 1921, must even sacrifice familial comfort, this quotation would seem to be in line with Kaiser's previous statements. However, that the alternative to a life without meaning is embodied by unquestioning devotion to an imperialistic leader, might suggest that Kaiser hoped to convey his message whilst simultaneously avoiding offending Nazi censors; as this play was written about the time that Kaiser was going into Swiss exile, when he had no doubt given up all hopes of staging or publishing his work in Germany, this explanation cannot satisfy. The weakness of Pferdewechsel is that Napoleon's military success is pinpointed as his central achievement; Gaspard in particular had found Napoleon's imperialism inspiring, rather than the former Emperor's more progressive political theories, which attracted Toller.²⁰ Gaspard's devotion is produced by Napoleon's personal charisma, not by the latter's drive to spread the ideals of the French Revolution throughout Europe. (Marie understands her husband's fatal subservience to the Emperor, but she also wishes to remain convinced that Gaspard's death was not pointless; Napoleon's doubts thus threaten her). Toller also sees a positive side to Napoleon, who understood the political significance of the masses.

In Briefe aus dem Gefängnis, Toller rejects Kurt Hiller's call for an intellectual elite by quoting Napoleon:

Kennen sie das Wort Napoleons: 'Die Menschen, die die Welt verändert haben, haben es nie erreicht, indem sie sich der Führer versicherten, sondern stets, indem sie die Massen erregten. Das eine Mittel führt nur zu Resultaten zweiten Ranges, das andere verändert das Antlitz der Welt.'²¹ (GW V, p. 166).

Napoleon remained consistent in his view of the masses. Count Emmanuel Las Cases records him saying "Si je suis demeuré dans le coeur de la masse, je dois m'importer peu des chefs; et, si je n'avais que ceux-ci, a quoi me serviraient-ils contre le torrent de la masse?"²² Toller admires Napoleon's attitude towards mass politics, and no doubt felt similarly about the latter's famous assertion:

Do you know what I admire most in the world? It's the total inability of force to organise anything. There are only two powers in the world - the sword and the spirit. By spirit I understand the civil and religious institutions... In the long run, the sword is always beaten by the spirit.²³

This quotation is thrown back at Napoleon by St. Francis in Nie wieder Friede! (GW III, p. 190); it is however, contradicted not only by Napoleon's deeds, but also by himself on other occasions. Las Cases recalls him saying: "En dernière analyse, disait l'Empereur, pour gouverner il faut être militaire: on ne gouverne qu'avec des éperons et des bottes."²⁴ Toller's Napoleon also rejects his own advocacy of the power of the spirit,²⁵ and is portrayed as a cynic who cannot believe man has any desire for peace. But as St. Francis' simple pacifism appears naive, Napoleon's cynicism is nevertheless representative of Toller's realism. "Friedenspakete haben nur einen Sinn. Sie dienen der Vorbereitung neuer Kriege," (GW III, p. 189) Napoleon

claims; Toller also realised that German rearmament was blatant preparation for an expansionist war, and that Hitler's assurances of peace were mere delaying tactics.

The other plays Kaiser wrote during this five-year period - Adrienne Ambrossat (1934-35), Agnete (1935), Rosamunde Floris, Alain und Elise, Vincent verkauft ein Bild (1937), Der Gärtner von Toulouse and Der Schuß in die Öffentlichkeit - are politically harmless and show how he withdrew into an inner world of subjective reality. Of these plays, only Agnete deals - peripherally - with social problems, for the central conflict (between the characters Heinrich and Stefan, who clash over Agnete) arises as a direct consequence of war. Agnete's act of pity - sleeping with the wounded Heinrich, who deliriously mistakes her for his bride Lena and whom Agnete believed to be dying - is prompted by the suffering caused by war. War is portrayed as hell (Werke VI, p. 97) and there are several clues which show Kaiser's disapproval of the regime. Stefan's mother, Frau M., remarks for example, that Heinrich will return to a radically altered Germany: "Hier ist ihm eine Welt zerbrochen. Kaum noch Vaterland zu nennen." (Werke VI, p. 87). Of course, Frau M. is saying primarily here that Heinrich will be disappointed to find that Lena has since died, but the reference to the 'fatherland' shows she must be thinking of other, more general circumstances as well. When Heinrich does return, expressing his disillusionment over the changes in Germany, Stefan replies: "Es wird auch in der Heimat wieder besser werden." (Werke VI, p. 119).

Vincent verkauft ein Bild and Der Schuß in die Öffentlichkeit, while clearly intended to be light entertainments,

are nevertheless revealing, because their central characters are penniless artists. Ironically, Flanagan, the writer in the latter play (a murder mystery which Kaiser must have hoped would prove to be a money-spinner), is complimented by his publisher for sticking idealistically to his artistic values (Werke III, p. 646), but finds that he is commercially unsuccessful. Unwin's wife Helen makes one remark in the play which can be interpreted as a reference to conditions in Nazi Germany: "Wir andern haben doch das offne Reden fast verlernt, wir flüstern nur noch. Lernen Sie nicht flüstern - es wär ein schlimmer Schaden, den Sie erlitten." (Werke III, p. 649). This advice - given to Flanagan - is an encouragement to spread higher ideals through art, irrespective of external pressure to conform to the status quo. In Vincent verkauft ein Bild, the artist's influential position is firmly denied by Buxton, when he tells Abel:

Wo bleibt dein Genie, das sich hinwegsetzt
im kühnen Angriff über Gut und Böse und
nur das Werk errichtet, das dann alles gutmacht?
Zehnmal verbessert? Wuchernd hundertfach?
- Nein, wir sind alle schwach. Du bist
es und ich bin es. Keiner von riesenhaftem
Wuchs, der unterm Himmel schattet. Sterne
sind Knöpfe seines Mantels und strömen Glanz
aus über alle Menschheit. Wir sind nur
Zwerge. (Werke VI, p. 224).

However, Abel does transcend good and evil and completes his swindle by tricking even his morally pure wife, Kate. This swindle is justified by the necessity to create art. But Abel only defeats the philistinism of Fenwick through carefully concealed dishonesty: his act is rather like Ernst Hoff's attempted fraud in Klawitter (1939-40), in that moral principles are sacrificed in order to ensure the artist's future. Kaiser thus attempts to justify writing plays which

do not directly challenge the authority of Germany's rulers.

Almost all the remaining plays of these years have this theme of twisted morality in common: Rosamunde Floris kills all those who threaten her other-worldly love for William (Rosamunde Floris); Alain takes on the guilt of Elise's crimes for the sake of a similarly celestial love (Alain und Elise); and François also forces his own guilt on his innocent wife Janine (Der Gärtner von Toulouse). Ernst Schürer sees François as particularly representative of Kaiser's attitude during these isolated years in Germany. François does not feel responsible for the state of the world:

Kann ich bestimmen - wann die Sonne scheint und wann der Regen fällt? Ich ordne nicht das Weltall. Es ist noch undurchsichtig, wie alles sich verhält. Bis andere Befehle kommen, gehorch' ich diesem: Gräben graben, bis sich die Flut verlaufen. (Werke III, p. 561).

Schürer believes this quotation captures the reason behind Kaiser's flight from reality at the time: "Wie dieser François vergrub sich Kaiser in seine Arbeit, die Konstruktion seiner Dramen, und hoffte, daß sich die braune Flut verlaufen würde."²⁶ However, Schürer does not point out that François is not sympathetically portrayed by Kaiser. On the contrary, his hypocrisy is evident throughout the play. His views on sexual love are puritanical and repressed, which is why he loves flowers: "Nie rührt ein Kelch den andern Kelch an. Und doch herrscht Liebe." (Werke III, p. 515). Despite this public attitude, he succumbs very easily to the seductions of Frau Téophot. Thus Kaiser certainly invites condemnation of François, even if the latter's reclusiveness parallels Kaiser's own. Other protagonists from this era who flee reality are sympathetically

drawn. They may be eventually punished by the conventions and moral laws which they defy, like Rosamunde Floris, or they may not, like Elise, but they all turn their backs on these conventions, deeming them irrelevant to their personal situations.

It must be remembered that Kaiser wrote many of these plays with the need to secure a livelihood uppermost in his mind. He hoped, for example, to be able to sell the film rights to some of them; in 1935 an earlier work, Kolportage, was filmed as Familienparade without, however, any mention of Kaiser's name, and the critic Bernhard Diebold adapted Vincent verkauft ein Bild for a film script. Kaiser also wrote numerous outlines for films, which he no doubt hoped to sell to Hollywood. Influential friends tried to get his plays accepted. Other plays from the years of 'inner exile', with their themes of flight from reality, express Kaiser's sense of isolation and his disgust at the political reality of Nazi Germany.

The best examples of Kaiser's true hatred of the Nazi establishment are in the form of eleven poems, which were illegally printed and passed around by left-wing workers in the factories of Berlin-Siemensstadt. These deliberately unaesthetic - 'unerotically pornographic' as Huder calls them²⁷ - verses, collectively called Die Gasgesellschaft (Werke IV, pp. 667-670), were written purely for the purpose of political agitation, and were never intended to be published or earn Kaiser a living. The earthy language of these poems is directly influenced by the slang terms the workers used to refer to Nazi hierarchy: Goebbels, for example, is "Das Scheißhuhn" and Streicher "Der Scheißhund." (See Werke IV, pp. 667-670). The German military leadership is attacked for bowing to the total authority of Hitler

in "Der Afterseher", while the Nazi ideologue Alfred Rosenberg is portrayed as a "Mistbock" excreting the manure of National Socialist propaganda. In one poem Kaiser turns on the small remainder of officially-tolerated writers, whose works were not burned on 10 May 1933. The literature of Nazi Germany is represented by faeces, apolitical and purely aesthetic ideas forwarded by these writers are described as "Rosinen im Kot." As the poems of Die Gasgesellschaft had no more than a political function, they must be regarded as more accurate reflections of Kaiser's opinions on Nazism than the plays Ossian Balvesen and Pferdewechsel. But it must also be remembered that Kaiser could have been one of the writers he attacks so venomously in "Rosinen im Kot" had Ossian Balvesen been found acceptable.²⁸

Despite Kaiser's sweeping attacks on art's validity in 1941 - statements recorded by Julius Marx which we shall consider shortly - the view of art as a weapon capable of effecting change (evident in a letter quoted above: Briefe, p. 341), becomes predominant during the first years Kaiser spent in Switzerland. However, this does not mean that Kaiser always viewed art as a means to fight fascism specifically or even improve society generally; often - and especially in the last two years of his life - Kaiser saw art as a refuge from the chaos around him. Thus, while we may see a growth of socialist views in Kaiser's work - and especially a new uncompromising view of fascism - this is always balanced by egocentricity and flight, elements which assume central importance in his final works.

Upon first reaching Switzerland though, the desire to attack the regime under which he had suffered for five years was uppermost in Kaiser's mind. After writing Klawitter, he turned his attention to another

play set in Nazi Germany: Der englische Sender (1942). Kaiser explained his drive to write these plays in a letter to Caesar von Arx:

Die mir innewohnende Tapferkeit und mein Wille zum Recht beauftragen mich zu solchen Werken. [...] Die militärischen Siege der amoralischen Faschisten müssen entwertet werden: durch die Moral der Kunst. Mit dieser Waffe vernichten wir ihre Erfolge des Augenblicks durch unsre Erfolge der Unvergänglichkeit. (Briefe, p. 545).

Kaiser does not just speak in hopeful abstractions, for he goes on to cite Gogol's The Government Inspector as an example of how an oppressive political system can be exposed and remembered through drama. Kaiser sees Gogol as a judge of his time, and concludes: "Richter bin auch ich."

In spite of Kaiser's feeling that he had successfully exposed the Nazis in Klawitter and Der englische Sender (which Kaiser intended to publish together under the title NSDAP), neither play has been particularly well received by critics,²⁹ who believe the impact of Nazism upon Kaiser to have been too intensely emotional, preventing him from delivering a convincing judgement on Hitler's Germany. Like Toller's Pastor Hall, they are set in Nazi Germany. Much of this adverse criticism is justified, especially if these plays are measured against Kaiser's own claim, quoted above, that he was exposing the true face of Nazism. As an explanation of Nazism's origins, Der englische Sender is unsatisfactory and naive, as we shall see. Klawitter, however, can be seen as Kaiser's attempt to deal with his immediate past, i.e. his final years in Germany, and, after Noli me tangere, as a further example of self-criticism in Kaiser's work. Ernst Hoff, the artist, is closely modelled on Kaiser himself, as Kenworthy points out,³⁰

being a dramatist who has completed many plays, who prefers to work at night, and who has been cut off from his source of income by the Nazis. As Kaiser himself claimed to be doing in Switzerland, it seems initially that Hoff wants to counter the amoral ideology of the Nazis via the morality of art, i.e. confront the vulgar violence of the regime - supported, sometimes passively, by complacent, petty bourgeois figures such as Hoff's Landlord or Klawitter himself - with "die Gewalt der Idee". Yet Hoff's attack on Nazi ideology is morally flawed, for his play - Bogen und Pfeile - which is designed to protect "den heiligen Gral der deutschen Kunst" (Werke VI, p. 321), is in fact, like Ossian Balvesen, entirely inoffensive politically, in this case by virtue of its timeless, 'eternal' - and therefore not tendentious - elements. Thus, while Hoff purports to be protecting what is truly great about German art, he has in actual fact deliberately written a play which is within the guidelines set out by Germany's new rulers, and for which he merely needs another name to act as author, as his own is taboo. Despite his alleged opposition to conformity, Hoff's need to enlist Klawitter is entirely pragmatic. Klaus Petersen sees the weakness of Klawitter as lying in Hoff's unfortunate choice of words, which come very close to the vocabulary of the Nazi authorities.³¹ Petersen is referring here to Hoff's repeated allusions to "die deutsche Kunst." Kaiser no doubt intended to point to that better tradition of German art and literature which Toller also recognised and which he tried constantly to remind the world of during the Thirties. However, this idea is unsatisfactorily demonstrated, because Hoff regards the apolitical classicism of Bogen und Pfeile as an example of the timeless art which he believes will be in demand after the demise of the Nazi regime, even though he has

written it to please Germany's new rulers.³² Quite apart from this, Klawitter appears weak when we take Kaiser's own claims about it, that is, that he successfully judged Nazism in this play, seriously. Shortly after writing this work, Kaiser predicted somewhat pessimistically: "Diesen Krieg gewinnen die Klawitter wie nie ein Krieg gewonnen wurde. Aus dieser Erkenntnis heraus schrieb ich doch die Komödie. Weil sonst kein Dokument erhalten bleibt, das von der Niedertracht der Sieger kündigt." (Briefe, p. 536). While the portrayal of the Nazi government representative Nuckel and the publishers who have changed their tune and quickly collaborated with the new order is quite perceptive, Hoff's ambiguous position completely undermines Kaiser's claim. But we have seen that Hoff's position is not unlike Kaiser's own in the Thirties, and the whole play can thus be seen as Kaiser's attempt to deal self-critically with these years. Huder believes Klawitter can be seen as a brutally honest confession, and he calls the play a "selbstbiographisches Schlüsselstück".³³ This is certainly plausible, even though there is nothing in Kaiser's letters to support the theory. The greatest irony of all is that this act of self-criticism appears not to have had an enduring effect on Kaiser, for Hoff's Bogen und Pfeile is a reclusive piece of theatre set in Greek mythological surroundings, the very genre Kaiser turned toⁱⁿ his final plays.

It emerges early in the play that Hoff is not in the least concerned with fighting the regime: he is content to sit out the "Tierzeit" and await the dawning of a new "Menschenzeit" (Werke VI, p. 319), but while he wishes to prepare himself for this new era by securing the means to write, he is not willing to contribute to its coming. On the contrary, before long he does not see Bogen und Pfeile as a one-off necessity, but

feels it could form the beginning of a mutually, materially beneficial partnership with Klawitter. Hoff only wants to be able to continue a reclusive existence within his art, as he tells his wife Elli, whom he does not yet suspect of surrendering herself to Klawitter: "Die [Welt der Kunst] hast du mir geöffnet - weit aufgetan die Pforte, durch die ich in ein Reich einziehe so groß - so riesig, wie ich's nie gekannt." (Werke VI, p. 366). Hoff's morals are clearly dubious, and even though his wavering, indecisive stance is eclipsed by the moral bankruptcy of Klawitter, his failure at the hands of the latter's opportunism can be seen as criticism of such a position. Instead of making an important contribution to the eventual overthrow of the regime (by representing a morally sound, exemplary idea), Hoff hopes for that overthrow but meanwhile attempts to play according to the rules. He only takes up an openly hostile position towards the Nazis when he realises that he has even lost his wife to Klawitter: but by this point his martyrdom has become pointless, as the Baker's avariciousness in the final scene shows. The Baker pockets the money left by Elli and rejected by Hoff; unlike the women who steal in the closing scene of Masse Mensch, he remains unrepentant about his theft.

The only other hint of self-criticism in the works Kaiser wrote whilst in exile can be discerned in Das Floß der Medusa (1940-43), and has gone hitherto unnoticed by critics. Allan, the play's central figure, is a humanitarian who sees through the hypocrisies and the irrational superstitions of the masses, represented by the other children in the lifeboat. We know from Kaiser's letters that he identified himself with the young Allan; in 1943 he wrote to Frida Haller, who was shortly due to have Alma Staub read Floß aloud

to her: "Ich weiß, daß Sie gern zuhören - und wenn Sie die Seele des Knaben Allan aufschreien hören, dann denken Sie daran, daß es meine Seele ist und daß ich Allan bin." (Briefe, p. 864). Some two years later he told von Arx: "Ich bin ALLAN - in ihm schilderte ich mich - ihn beneide ich um seinen jungen Tod." (Briefe, p. 1110). Allan chooses death because he sees the sheer depravity of man; his death is nihilistic and without real hope for change. However, while it is thus tempting to draw analogies between Allan's and Kaiser's lack of faith in mankind, with the help of Kaiser's own admissions that he saw himself as Allan, the reasons for Allan's failure are easily overlooked. For he does indeed fail: he fails to prevent Füchslein's death, because he succumbs to Ann, who uses her precocious charms to distract Allan and have Füchslein thrown out of the boat. Allan successfully counters the superstitious fears of the others several times, but his wavering humanitarian stance is shown to be insufficient in the battle against the scheming evil which is represented by Ann. Allan fails to see her true nature and act against it accordingly and consistently, even though she argues openly in favour of ejecting one passenger. This lack of consistency arises out of Allan's dual attitude towards Ann: he attacks her position, but, on a personal level, falls in love with her. At one point he even saves her from becoming the victim of her own schemes; unbeknown even to Ann herself, he throws away her lot. Allan fails because he is not aware of Ann's willingness to exploit his love for her. This can be seen as a portrayal of innocence; on the other hand, Allan can be criticised for taking too individual and emotional a stance in the face of the open hostility towards Füchslein in the boat, which Ann spawns and encourages.

In Pastor Hall, Friedrich Hall struggles to reach what Hoff sees too late: the realisation of the need for an exemplary statement, even if such a stand should incur great personal suffering and possibly death. Despite the threat of torture, and the added burden of the responsibility of a family, Hall overcomes his fears with the recognition that only complete commitment to the idea is enough to topple a regime which maintains itself through fear. Despite certain death he realises that his example will live:

Ich werde trotzdem leben. Es wird wie ein Feuer sein, keine Macht es ersticken, die Ängstlichen werden Mut fassen, einer wird es dem andern sagen, daß der Antichrist regiert, der Verderber, der Feind des Menschen... und sie werden Stärke finden und werden meinem Beispiel folgen. (GW III, p. 316).

Bütow believes that the alternative ending - in which Hall dies before making a final public attack on the regime from the pulpit - shows the total resignation of a sceptical Toller.³⁴ This is not the case, as Hall decides, in this earlier version as well, to sacrifice himself in order to proclaim a moral alternative to the regime. "Wer die Furcht überwunden hat, hat den Tod überwunden," (GW III, p. 330) he declares resolutely and in this echoes Toller's own assertion in the Introduction to Briefe aus dem Gefängnis: "Wer aber die Furcht überwunden hat, der ist der wahre Feind der Diktatoren." (GW V, p. 10). His death becomes a shining example to his family and friends, as his daughter recognises strongly and optimistically at the end of the play (GW III, p. 331), even though he does not reach the wider audience of his congregation as in the later version. In this later version Paul von Grotjahn is given a chance to redeem his underestimation of the danger of Nazism, and joins Hall's protest in the Church.

Friedrich Hall's stand is successful because it is motivated by a moral idea. After Dimitrov had been acquitted at the Reichstag fire trial, Toller perceived a similar moral victory over the Nazis: "Er [Dimitrov] beweist durch sein Leben den Sieg der höheren Idee."³⁵ Like the Field Commander in Die Lederköpfe, Hall overcomes the fear which dictatorial repression breeds to strike a blow at the regime. Hoff's - belated - attack (undertaken when he smashes the radio broadcasting Goebbels' speech on art) is motivated by personal circumstances, and is consequently not understood by its witnesses.

Kaiser - like Toller - also begins to condemn the aestheticism of classical literature during these early war years. In December 1940 he wrote to von Arx:

Ich hasse Dante und Goethe, die am Schluß ihrer Werke alles beschönigten und mit Honig überstrichen. Dantes Paradiso ist erbärmlich - großartig das Inferno. Vom Schluß des Faust will ich schweigen. Das ist Verrat und Betrug. Wir sind weiter gekommen: wir halten die Fackel ins schmutzige Dunkel - und leuchten hinein, bis uns die Hand versengt wird. (Briefe, p. 568).

Even during the years of 'inner exile' when he wrote Die Gasgesellschaft, Kaiser was motivated by a desire to communicate directly with workers and to encourage anti-fascist thought. To his wife Margarethe he wrote - also in 1940 - : "Uns macht man nichts mehr vor - und das wird die neue Aufgabe der Dichtkunst: nichts beschönigen - kräftig entlarven." (Briefe, p. 555). In a letter to Julius Marx, he admonishes the latter's sister (who had belittled her brother's anti-fascist dramatic efforts), claiming artistic resistance to be more productive than any charitable work: "Das bißchen erzwungene Judenhilfe, das sie leistet, tut

es nicht," (Briefe, p. 777) and he predicts (rather exaggeratedly) that von Arx is destined to write a play which will completely change the petty Swiss nature. (Briefe, p. 895). Rilke's reclusive lyricism prompts Kaiser to call him "der lyrische Damenfreund"; George is dismissed as "der parfümierte Barde". (Briefe, p. 1087). Not surprisingly however, we find that Kaiser is not entirely consistent in this matter, for only eleven days after he had decided to go on to the offensive against the Nazis via his writing (Briefe, p. 555, quoted above), he denigrates the value of a fighting, political art in favour of a more distanced, unbiased approach: "Der Soldat Tanaka ist ein Protest - also eine relative Dichtung. Rosamunde Floris ist die reine Seele der Kunst, die in Unabhängigkeit schwebt."³⁶ (Briefe, p. 549 - my emphasis). Here Kaiser shows that he is unable to identify and transcend bourgeois ideas of the role of art as consistently as Toller.

Toller certainly retains his views on bias in the exile years. He reiterates the ideas of his essay, "Bemerkungen zum deutschen Nachkriegsdrama", when he writes:

As long as these dramatists, such as Hauptmann in Germany, Gorky in Russia, Galsworthy and Shaw in England, showed in satirical vein only one aspect of society, or expressed the sufferings of the people and aroused the pity of the audience, society adopted their dramas and comedies in a more or less tolerant spirit. But when dramatists arise who portray the people as an independent force fighting for freedom, no longer asking for pity, but out to conquer and claim their rights, then indignation is aroused and one says these plays are propaganda.³⁷

The modern writer must expose the truth, however uncomfortable, Toller maintains, and not worry about accusations

of bias. As he had concluded in the pre-exile years, Toller stipulates that official truth is in any case distorted and biased: history books would have people believe that wars are fought for great ideals, rather than power and material wealth.³⁸

While Kaiser may not be as consistent as Toller on the issues of classicism and bias, his references to a moral, fighting drama during the first half of his Swiss exile are more frequent than those favouring a form of writing which exists on a higher plane. He believes, for example, that the Swiss stages are mediocre: "Bretter für gerechte Kämpfe sind sie nicht." (Briefe, p. 683). This assertion is based on Kaiser's own experience: in November 1940 Der Soldat Tanaka was banned from the Zürich Schauspielhaus only days after it was premiered there. The Swiss authorities, cautious in their neutrality, took heed of the Japanese Embassy's official protest. Somewhat prophetically perhaps, Kaiser had remarked a year earlier in a letter to Franz Theodor Csokor: "Vertraulich: mit dem Schauspielhaus in Zürich dürfen Sie niemals rechnen. Das ist eine kleinbürgerliche Schmiere, die noch dazu von der Stadt subventioniert wird." (Briefe, p. 474). Nevertheless, Kaiser's bitterness is personal here, for the Schauspielhaus premiered an impressive list of plays by anti-fascist writers, including Die Rassen by Bruckner, Denn sie wissen nicht, was sie tun by Broch, Bellmann by Zuckmayer, and Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder, Der gute Mensch von Sezuan and Leben des Galilei by Brecht. Furthermore, the Stadttheater in Basle refused, despite protests from the German Consulate, to stop the production of Steinbeck's The Moon is Down, a work much admired by Kaiser. (Briefe, p. 795).

Der Soldat Tanaka is a far more successful attack on fascism than Klawitter. Unlike the latter play, Tanaka is not a tortuous autobiographical confession; in choosing Japan as a setting, Kaiser gains the necessary emotional distance from his own experience in Nazi Germany. Tanaka, like Friedrich Hall, opposes a repressive system with a principled and courageous accusation. Tanaka kills the officer Umezu and his sister Yoshiko in a highly agitated state, which the Court is willing to forgive him; like Karl Thomas in Hoppla, wir leben!, Tanaka becomes truly dangerous to the system when he coolly and rationally accuses it. His revolutionary attitude is far graver than his murders, the judge maintains: "Du hast dein Urteil nicht gemildert - jetzt hast du es verdient. (Werke III, p. 768). Like any other repressive, militaristic system, the Japanese authorities recognise the subversive power of the moral idea. Tanaka, like Hall, overcomes a great internal barrier: ingrained respect. Like Friedrich in Toller's first play, Tanaka sees through the social conditioning to which his entire class is subject.

Of Napoleon in New Orleans, a work equally condemning of militarism as Tanaka, Kaiser writes:

Dieser Dergan ist der wahre Held oder Unheld oder Unhold dieser Zeit. Es bleibt mein Verdienst für die nächsten Jahrhunderte diesen Typus festgenagelt zu haben. Diesen blinden Verehrer des Kriegs und der blut-morastigen Schlachtfelder. Weil mein Werk über diese Zeit in eine weite Zukunft hinausgreift, muß es von der Zeit mißachtet werden. (Briefe, p. 691).

Kaiser thus feels that the non-classical aims of this play are actually what make it a great, eternal work of art. Certainly he feels that it attacks the false god of militarism: "Es räumt gründlich mit der Verherrlichung von Helden auf, die Verbrecher sind. Verbrecher

sind auch jene, die sie so lange und furchtbar wirken ließen." (Briefe, p. 818). Kaiser recognises here that dictators can only exist with the active (and passive) support of the masses. Whether or not Kaiser sees his five years in Nazi Germany in a critical light here is not clear; certainly Klawitter shows that he was capable of self-criticism. In any case this letter is evidence of Kaiser's rejection of relativised values, of historians' and politicians' tendency to rationalise the criminal. He uses the term "Verbrecher" here to mean something absolute. Toller agrees; in "Man and the Masses: the Problem of Peace", he writes: "There is no democracy of ideas. Democracy of ideas leads to the despotism of the robber and the man of violence."³⁹ (GW I, p. 80).

However, Kaiser cannot be said to have applied the absolute values he demanded in his art to himself. As soon as his personal lot shows signs of improving, his attitude to Germany suddenly changes. In February 1943, shortly after he had felt great despair at his art having been ignored by mankind,⁴⁰ Kaiser received a letter from Germany from which he inferred that working conditions for artists were improving: "Für mich ist das ein Zeichen, daß man in Deutschland wieder anders zu denken beginnt und sich auf mich und meinesgleichen besinnt. Ich glaube, wir können wieder mit Deutschland rechnen." (Briefe, p. 839). His optimism does not appear to have been long-lived, however, for only eleven days later he condemns the Germans as "kein Volk - sie sind eine Epidemie." (Briefe, p. 842).)

From 1943 onward Kaiser's view of art once again becomes more introspective. The disappointments of the continuing war, the constant trek around various hotels and guest-houses which the Swiss immigration authorities forced

Kaiser into, took their inevitable toll: he began to despise mankind and live through his art, which could no longer change man: "Es werden gute Bücher geschrieben - aber wozu? Die Wirkung ist ausgelöscht - trotzdem schaffen die Dichter. Sie sind die wahren Helden." (Briefe, p. 856). In June 1942 he had written to Margarethe that art, great and immortal, was his solace in life. (Briefe, p. 754). This more egocentric attitude takes over from his former optimistic assertions that art would triumph over the Nazis. There were times when Kaiser even saw this flight into his writing as hopelessly doomed: "Wie lange behauptet sich meinesgleichen noch? Ich schrieb den Pygmalion - eine innere Oase, doch die Sandstürme des Stumpfsinns decken sie bald zu. Wie alles andere." (Briefe, p. 969). Toller never succumbs to this kind of despair, because he is more realistic about the time-scale needed for just ideas to triumph over violence and tyranny and has no illusions about the horrific degree of suffering man would have to endure beforehand. He describes the writer as the 'incorruptible historian' in his review of Hermann Kesten's novel, Ferdinand und Isabella: he asserts that the immorality of total, repressive dictatorship, previously glorified by historians, can only be exposed by the artist. Even though it may take centuries for the truth to be told, the material triumphs of despotism are never permanent, Toller believes the message behind Kesten's work to be: "Auf jeder Seite spürt man den Glauben an die unzerstörbare Überlegenheit des Geistes über die vergeblich triumphierende Tyrannei." (GW I, p. 153). Toller's 'incorruptible historian' is very much representative of his morally sound artist, not artists in general. As we have seen, Toller describes the establishment artist as a ruling-class lackey, and in Nie wieder Friede! he brings just such an artist to life in Tomas. Kaiser also

recognised the artist as a potential weapon in the establishment's arsenal:

Was aber tun die Künstler? Sie verherrlichen diese Größen der Unmenschlichkeit, machen sie zu Standbildern der Ewigkeit, um dafür ein Stück Kuchen vom Teller der feinen Leute hingeschleudert zu bekommen. Ohne die Kunst wird es keine Verherrlichung der Verbrecher mehr geben. Das Volk wird dann nicht mehr getäuscht werden.⁴¹

While this statement - made in 1941 - may show that Kaiser moved closer to Toller's political position, it is nevertheless typical of Kaiser in that he pursues an absolute argument. As the following paragraph will show as well, Kaiser, when condemning art, condemns it utterly. Toller attacks art for art's sake, but always presents a positive alternative.

While Kaiser's letters tend towards an elitist view of art and its function during the final years of his life, Julius Marx records Kaiser's apparent total rejection of all art for political reasons. In a diary entry dated 16 February 1941, Marx claims Kaiser rejected Schiller because the latter's plays encourage - via their idealism - fascist ideology. While Marx agrees to a certain extent, pointing out that the Nazis were able to use Don Carlos for their own purposes, the third party to this conversation interestingly points out that only a certain type of work of art can be interpreted in such a dangerous way. Kaiser remains oblivious to the fact that his own work could apply here: in 1933 Goebbels had plans to use Die Bürger von Calais, with its ecstatic message of regeneration applied no doubt purely to German nationalism rather than the whole of mankind. Kaiser goes on to attack art for its apolitical (and therefore irresponsible) nature; he describes it as "aesthetisierende

Verlogenheit."⁴² Instead of advocating the responsible, politically moral alternative that Toller had always proposed, Kaiser goes on to condemn art outright: "Humanität bedeutet, Kunst nicht zu fördern, sondern auszurotten. Die Kunst untergräbt das mögliche Glück der Menschheit. Deshalb muß die Kunst liquidiert werden."⁴³ He takes this theoretical demand to its logical conclusion:

Ich müsste ja eigentlich bei mir selbst anfangen, müsste mich selbst liquidieren, die Welt von mir befreien, weil ich zu nichts anderem fähig war und fähig bin, als Kunst zu produzieren, anstatt Vernunfts-Chemikalien gegen die faschistische Pest zu erfinden.⁴⁴

Ironically, however, unlike Toller, Kaiser actually witnessed the triumph of ideas over military might. Early hopes of defying the Nazi ban by joining forces once again with Kurt Weill had been dashed, as an American visa had been denied him. Kaiser had greeted the proposal to work with Weill in New York as a chance to show how artists could triumph over political interference: "So schließt sich die Kette wieder, die die teutonischen Barbaren glaubten unterbrechen zu können." (Briefe, p. 634). However, despite this disappointment in 1941, Die Bürger von Calais was broadcast by the newly-liberated Radio Toulouse in April 1945, which Kaiser found both moving and hopeful:

Noch im Krieg wird das Werk eines Deutschen - eines Mitglieds dieser verhaßten Nation - im französischen Radio verbreitet. Soll man nicht für die Zukunft freudig hoffen? Es ist der erste Lichtstrahl - und gleich ein so heller - der in die Nacht dieser Jahre des Exils fällt. Der Krieg löscht sich aus und über die Barrikaden von Schmutz steigen wir siegreich - wir die ewigen Sieger ohne Niederlage und mit dem unendlichen Mut begabt, dem kein Gegner widersteht. (Briefe, p. 1111).

The Perception of Nazism: Optimism, Pessimism
and the Role of the Masses.

While Kaiser's works may reflect a desire to escape reality, or even advocate right-wing values, his letters are virtually consistent⁴⁵ in their condemnation of Nazism, as are Toller's writings from the years in exile. Toller's work reflects a certain optimism in its belief that Nazism will eventually be overcome from within - via the ideals propagated through art, which Toller believed to be as innate to Germany as militarism and the rejection of democracy - no less than from the outside. Kaiser's letters on the other hand, waver between optimism and pessimism, and his response to Nazism is often very much coloured by bitterness over his personal fate, while Toller is constantly aware of others who have suffered as a result of the Nazi regime.

We shall see that Toller - aware of the extent of the danger which Nazism posed throughout the Thirties, as indeed he had been in the Twenties - repeatedly called for organised and real opposition to Hitler's Germany. In 1934, Toller warned a British readership: "The hypocrisies of today seek to blind us to the fact that very soon the whole of Europe will stand in flames."⁴⁶ Kaiser also expresses a fear of Europe being laid waste by war (*Briefe*, p. 454), but not until August and September 1939, when war was indeed imminent. However, Toller fights off despair and sees plenty of scope for optimism. It is always darkest before the dawn, he maintains defiantly, and believes fascism to be the old world's final desperate attempt to fend off the new. Alluding to the Nazi use of

the phrase, "Deutschland erwache!", Toller predicts confidently:

Doch eines Tages wirst du wahrhaft erwachen.
Du wirst dich aus der Umklammerung deiner
Fesseln befreien, du wirst die Tyrannen
verjagen, Freiheit und Gerechtigkeit werden
in dir herrschen, du wirst der Wegbegleiter
befriedeter Menschheit sein, und dein Name
wird wieder leuchten, rein, in einer reineren
Welt. (GW I, p. 209).

In his cycle of poems collectively called Die Feuer-Kantate (1938) Toller interprets even the Reichstag fire optimistically: its inextinguishable memory is portrayed as a warning to future generations.⁴⁷ As already stated, Kaiser exhibits both optimism - "Caesar, dieser Sturm wird vorübergehen und Deutschland von der Pest reinigen," (Briefe, p. 457) - and pessimism when reacting to the War and Nazism. Both Toller's and Kaiser's responses here are rooted in their respective attitudes towards the masses. While Toller writes of dictators who are supported by a powerful minority, and reminds the world of the suppressed anti-Nazi elements within Germany, Kaiser often claims despairingly that the Germans - or humanity at large - have only themselves to blame for their leaders. Although Julius Marx' book Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen and Kaiser's artistic work bear witness to the growth of socialist ideas in Kaiser's outlook, the old disdain for the masses is still evident. In 1941, Kaiser told Marx:

Wie jedes Volk seinen Staat und seine Regierung verdient, so verdient die Menschheit ihre Führer, mögen sie Roosevelt oder Hitler heißen. [...] Da die heutigen Staatsmänner und Staatsbürokraten nichts anderes als Kloaken-Gestalten sind, die Völker jedoch diese Bande sanktionieren, kann man die Menschheit kaum anders als eine bestialische Horde bezeichnen, deren Untergang wünschenswert ist, damit wenigstens das Tierreich überlebt.⁴⁸

This attitude, which further shows Kaiser's inability to build consistently the idea of repression into his Weltanschauung (see Chapter III), is reflected in his letters. In 1940 he made the pessimistic prediction to Caesar von Arx that the War would be won by the 'Klawitters.' (Briefe, p. 536-537). Klawitter, however, is not an innately powerful figure, but a selfish opportunist whose stupidity and moral bankruptcy leads to his becoming a model citizen of the new Germany. In other words, when blaming the 'Klawitters', Kaiser is not attacking the Nazi hierarchy, nor its fanatical ideology, nor the old capitalist and aristocratic order which placed it in power, but the fellow-traveller, a representative of the masses who has succeeded in using the new establishment in order to rise from obscurity. Schmutz, the small-town Nazi official in Der englische Sender, is a similar figure, a little man who has suddenly acquired some power and abuses it.

Hounded from Germany, only to be harassed continually by the Swiss police, Kaiser must have felt surrounded by the petty concerns of the 'Klawitters'. In 1941 he wrote, somewhat sarcastically, that he thought no more than a hundred people would understand his work after a hundred years: "Das ist ein solcher Riesenerfolg, daß mir jetzt schon schwindelt." (Briefe, p. 590). Occasionally, Kaiser's bitterness about Hitler's spectacular early successes in the War prompt him to turn against the masses: "Es ist gerecht, was jetzt geschieht. Man hat die Nazis groß werden lassen, dafür wird jetzt gebüßt." (Briefe, p. 625). This contempt is sometimes directed specifically against the German people: "Gott hat in seiner allgütigen Vorsehung diesen Führerstolch den Deutschen geschickt, damit endlich

diese reudige [sic] Nation vom Erdboden vertilgt werde." (Briefe, p. 972). The mediocrity - bemoaned by Kaiser in his essays and conversations of the Twenties-which had already hampered the creation of great art, is also the cause of the political chaos of the Twentieth Century, Kaiser believes. An eventual Allied triumph over the Nazis would not change this central fact; for Britain and the United States Kaiser has nothing but scorn during the War years, and he accuses them too of fostering mediocrity: "Diese beiden Länder haben dafür gesorgt, daß die Mittelmäßigkeit triumphiert." (Briefe, p. 872). From 1943 onward Kaiser had only bitter resentment for the masses, whom he saw as adversaries of the artist. Upon finishing Zweimal Amphitryon (1943) Kaiser expressed regret to his wife that he had discovered verse so late in life:

Schade, daß das Leben nicht ausreicht, um diese zweite Findung der Sprache zur Vollendung auszubauen. So bleibt alles Menschenwerk ein Torso - und die unbegabte Menge nimmt den Torso als Vollkommenes hin und bildet so die falschen Urteile über Kunst und Geist - um beide gründlich zu vernichten. Das scheint mir überhaupt die Aufgabe der Massen zu sein. (Briefe, p. 932).

Kaiser is not entirely consistent in his condemnation of the masses, however. He contradicts himself in conversation with Julius Marx for example; only a week before declaring that humanity has the leaders it deserves (quotation no. 48 above), he had postulated:

Wer aber hat die Kloakenmänner auf ihre Sitze gehoben? Nicht das Volk. Das Volk ist noch nicht einmal dazu fähig. Die Französische und die russische Revolution haben sich leider als periphere Erscheinungen erwiesen. Das Volk ist im allgemeinen immer noch unpolitisch. Diese Tatsache nützen z.B. in Deutschland die Schlotbarone und Krautjunker, der Offiziersklüngel und die einflußreichen klerikalen Kreise dafür aus,

um Verbrecher, Zuhälter und Diebe in den Sattel des Staatsrosses zu heben.⁴⁹

On the one hand, this quotation shows Kaiser's contempt for the masses; "Das Volk ist noch nicht einmal dazu fähig," he says, effectively denying them that which he attributes to them in quotation no. 48, namely the tendency to think and act stupidly. But Kaiser is in some respects relatively close to Toller's position on the masses here, if one is willing to overlook the lack of sympathy for the peoples' lot. Firstly, Kaiser describes the masses here as 'basically apolitical'. This political ignorance is the adversary of many Toller protagonists, such as Jimmy Cobbett and Albert Kroll. In his tribute to Henri Barbusse, Toller describes the politically enlightened elements of the working class as a 'minority'. (GW I, p. 123). Secondly, Kaiser adds to the idea of social division - which had appeared in his essays of the Twenties - the notion of certain powerful sections of the ruling class cynically abusing the political ignorance of the masses. We have seen that this concept of a deliberately manipulative ruling class occupies a prominent place in Toller's work; in Kaiser's it is rarer. Many of these statements (such as quotation no. 48, or the following three statements taken from Briefe) were made in 1940 or 1941; they show that while Kaiser's portrayal of the masses in his work of the years 1938-43 becomes more positive than ever before - as we shall see in the next chapter -, this development is not accompanied by real sympathy for them. This sympathy is lacking even when the masses are depicted - as in quotation no. 49 - as the pawns of a ruling class. In his letters, Kaiser is only less condemning of the masses when he considers the fate of peoples conquered by Nazi expansionism: "Die Luftangriffe - ebenfalls in ihrer Art ein Akt der Feigheit - zerstören Städte, aber

befreien keine gequälten Völker. Und nur darauf kommt es an." (Briefe, p. 983). Usually, however, Kaiser blames the masses for allowing such repression and violence to occur in the first place, which is why he lacks real emotional sympathy for them. In his "Abschiedsworte [...] an Paul Grätz", Toller recalls his friend expressing such sympathy:

'Es ist ja nicht möglich', wiederholte er immer wieder, 'daß meine Berliner das Geschwätz ernst nehmen und Ja und Amen sagen zu all dem Unmenschlichen. Das kann mir niemand weismachen, ich kenne sie doch alle, die Jungens aus Moabit und vom Wedding, die Mädels von Wertheim und Tietz, die Portiers, und die Zeitungsverkäufer, die Budiker und Zillebrüder!... Mensch, wenn die erwachen!'

Aus solchen Worten sprach die Liebe, die keine Enttäuschung, keine grausame Erfahrung, auch nicht der Haß und das Gebelfer der Verfolger töten kann.⁵⁰

While Toller never fails to stress the importance and effects of social conditioning, he does concede that the masses have a tremendous responsibility for the political climate. Toller addressed himself to this issue of mass responsibility in one of the speeches he delivered - entitled "Sind wir verantwortlich für unsere Zeit?" - whilst on a lengthy lecture tour of America in 1936-37. The lecture begins with the ominous sentence: "Im allgemeinen fürchten die Menschen die Wahrheit."⁵¹ In other words, people perceive something innately terrifying about truths which threaten the existing order. Toller continues by asserting that the masses did have responsibility to bear in the Weimar Republic: "Nicht nur die unzulänglichen Führer, und es hat an unzulänglichen Führern in der deutschen Republik nicht gefehlt, tragen die Verantwortung, ebenso verantwortlich waren die Geführten."⁵² Toller sees this reluctance to think and bear responsibility

as one of the chief psychological reasons behind the failure of Weimar and the success of Hitler:

Die Menschen waren müde des Denkens und Nachdenkens. Sie fühlten nur, 'so kann es nicht mehr weitergehen', und als dann ein falscher Messias auftrat, der ihnen die Last des Denkens und die Last der Verantwortung abnahm, da vergotteten sie ihn und folgten ihm in sklavischem Gehorsam.⁵³

In Kaiser's Napoleon in New Orleans, the character Napoleon-Youyou describes to Baron Dergan the sort of men they are looking for to fill the ranks of their imperial army: "Männer, auf die Verlaß ist. Gehorchen wie die Hunde. Bedenkenlos bereit. Denken? Der Zweck des Kopfs? Sein Maul zum essen. Ein Loch wie jenes andre, das der Verdauung dient!" (Werke III, p. 606).

As Toller continues to stress the long-term effects of militaristic propaganda in schoolbooks, as he speaks of the necessity for a "Vertiefung der Demokratie" in the same lecture,⁵⁴ we can only conclude that he regards conditioning as ultimately responsible for the behaviour of the masses, even though he simultaneously refuses to excuse them. True democracy, Toller says, is spread from below;⁵⁵ while he appeals for benevolent treatment of the people from above, he claims all real change comes about when the masses transcend conditioning. Toller acknowledges the difficulty of shaking off carefully bred 'instincts',⁵⁶ but at the same time reproaches the masses for succumbing to them, for they have shown at historical intervals that they are capable of overcoming the false ideas they have been spoon-fed. True democracy means heightened responsibility for all; the Germans, however, have failed in their responsibilities, Toller tells the American public. He makes an appeal to the citizens

of a country with a greater democratic tradition than that of Germany, hoping thereby to rouse a sense of responsibility in every one of his listeners: "Von der verantwortlichen Entscheidung jedes Einzelnen hängt das Schicksal unserer Zeit ab."⁵⁷ Thus Toller appeals directly to the masses of one country, hoping to help prevent the sort of breeding-ground on which fascism thrives. His assault on fascism is a two-pronged one: on the one hand he tries to address the ordinary worker, hoping to instil in him or her a feeling of responsibility, on the other, he addresses the Americans in positions of authority, imploring them to prepare youth for democracy, not right-wing fanaticism:

You have also in this country millions of young men and women who despair of their future. It is not enough to pay them a dole. Give them hope for the future, knowledge, and a share in the cultural achievements of American civilisation.⁵⁸

How is Nazism to be Countered?

Earlier in this chapter Toller's ideas on how the artist should react to Nazism were investigated: by fighting the political repression of writers in Germany, Toller applied his idea of the politically motivated artist to Nazi Germany in particular. In his essays he also publicly urged the Western powers to take a firm line against Hitler's Germany: the policy of appeasement he quite rightly saw as disastrous. He saw it not only as immoral, but as politically stupid, as it merely encouraged Hitler. Toller recognised that Nazi propaganda aimed at creating a harmless image abroad, and that this disinformation led to Hitler's regime being underestimated. In November 1933 he wrote to Leon Trotsky from Britain:

Immer stärker werden die Wirkungen der Hitlerschen Propaganda in England bemerkbar. Man sagte mir übrigens, daß Goebbels der Deutschen Botschaft £ 38 000 dazu zur Verfügung gestellt hat. Die politische Haltung der Labour Party zur Hitler-Frage ist unglücklich und verhängnisvoll. Sie merken nicht, daß sie besten [sic] Helfer Hitlers sind.⁵⁹

Conversely, any foreign condemnation of Hitler's regime would encourage the underground opposition:

One has to be clear on one thing and that is that each foreign policy defeat of Hitler, encourages, strengthens and gives new impetus to the peace forces which are within Germany's boundaries and which are the true allies of European democracy, while each diplomatic success weakens and morally discourages the opposition in Germany.⁶⁰ (GW I, p. 84).

The only way in which Hitler could be successfully countered was through unity and defensive force, Toller insists: "Man muß ihn und seine Helfershelfer lehren, daß jede Verletzung des internationalen Völkerrechts, jeder bewaffnete Angriff dem vereinten Widerstand der Demokratien begegnen wird." (GW I, p. 207). A passive attitude towards Nazi Germany would be pointless as Hitler's course was one of blatant aggression; peace, therefore, could only be an alternative if it was enforced:

Wenn es der Welt nicht gelingt, Hitler zum Frieden zu zwingen, wird er Deutschland und Europa in einen Trümmerhaufen verwandeln und die Zivilisation vernichten. Er hat nie einen Schwur gehalten. Er wird nie einen Vertrag halten. Nur eine Sprache versteht er, die Sprache des Willens und der Macht. (GW I, p. 207).

Kaiser, on the other hand, does not reproach the policies of the Western Allies during the pre-war years; but sees their wartime behaviour as the epitome of political

stupidity or even occasionally as criminal. During the war, Kaiser often attacks the Allies - for what he sees as their lack of resolve and cynicism - more than the aggression of the Nazis. Julius Marx tells us: "Georg Kaiser haßt die politische Dummheit mehr als die politische Bosheit."⁶¹ This is echoed by Kaiser himself, who in 1943 wrote to von Arx: "Die Dummheit kämpft gegen die Gemeinheit - das ist dieser Krieg." (Briefe, p. 905) At the beginning of the War Kaiser fills his letters with derisive remarks about Chamberlain and Daladier, the Western participants in the Munich Agreement. He portrays these two leaders as figures of ridicule, comparing them to Don Quixote and Sancho Pansa, and repeatedly alludes to his plans to write a series of short satirical filmscripts featuring the clown-like figures of "Cham" and "Dal", with titles such as: "CHAM und DAL als Polenbefreier," and "CHAM und DAL versprechen die Sahara zu bewässern." (Briefe, p. 485). As Toller had before him, Kaiser criticises cordial diplomatic dealings with Nazi Germany, as these contacts serve only to lend credibility to a regime which has no respect for diplomacy; Kaiser sees a particularly farcical irony in the meeting between von Ribbentrop and the Pope:

Der Papst empfängt Ribbentropp. [sic].
Welch ein Dummkopf - nicht Ribbentropp,
sondern der heilige Papa. Heute steht in
allen polnischen Zeitungen: der Papst empfing
den deutschen Außenminister. Es ist also
alles in bester Ordnung. Der Papst begrüßt
den Menschenschinder aus Deutschland. Das
wollten die Nazis - und da die Nazis nur
mit Dummköpfen in der Welt zu tun haben,
erreichen sie, was sie wollen. (Briefe,
p. 516).

But there are occasions in Kaiser's letters where the political stupidity of appeasement is portrayed not as weak, but as downright criminal; even whilst

formulating his Cham und Dal plans, he writes: "Wenn ich an Cham und Dal denke - ich weiß nicht, sind die nun nur komisch, oder schon Verbrecher." (Briefe, p. 486). By 1943, his harsh attitude towards the British and American leaders had not softened:

Wann und wie werden die Friedensverbrecher
abgeurteilt, die alles soweit kommen ließen?
Wann stellt man sie neben die Kriegsverbrecher?
Der Tag wird nicht kommen. Die wirklichen
Lumpen gehen immer frei aus. In London
und Washington wird man keine Galgen errichten.⁶²
(Briefe, p. 927).

Both Toller and Kaiser then, detect a lack of political will and resolve among the nations strong enough to oppose the Nazi threat. While Toller repeatedly calls for an end to appeasement (but - as we shall see - places his hopes increasingly in Western democracy), Kaiser accuses the Western powers again and again, (Briefe, p. 783) after witnessing the bewildering rapidity of the Nazi subjugation of Europe. We shall now turn our attention to Toller's and Kaiser's attitudes toward the Soviet Union and America, the two leading exponents of the existing political alternatives to Nazi Germany.

Political Alternatives to Nazism: Attitudes Towards the Soviet Union and America.

During the early years of his exile, Toller hoped that the Soviet Union would foster anti-fascist art (GW I, p. 181), but there appears to be a shift in his attitude towards the Soviet Union in the last two years of his life. In 1926 - during the visit from which the letters in Quer Durch originate - his view was very positive, though not uncritical;⁶³ at the 1934 Congress of Soviet Writers he still regarded the people of the USSR as pioneers, as the vanguard

of "die sich befreiende Menschheit." (GW I, p. 179). Reacting to adverse comments upon the suppression of cultural and intellectual life in the Soviet Union made by H.G. Wells, Toller wrote a month after his return from the Congress: "My strongest impression in Russia was that, while in Fascist countries intellectual freedom is ever more and more closely circumscribed, and writers who do not slavishly obey the orders of the dictators must go into exile, in the USSR, on the other hand, intellectual freedom is growing."64 Toller goes on to cite the massive reduction of illiteracy which took place after the Revolution, and the undogmatic portrayal of the capitalist in Gorky's most recent play. At about the same time as the Writers' Congress, Toller published a small piece in the German language Moscow periodical, Internationale Literatur, in which he hailed the Russian Revolution as the beginning of a new era. In this article, the Soviet Union is portrayed as the most important single bulwark against fascism: "Was haben wir der UdSSR zu danken? Ihr Dasein. Heute mehr denn je," and is seen as the spiritual home "aller freien Geister."65 However, though Toller remains silent on the Show Trials^{and} the mass persecution under Stalin,

his attitude towards the United States becomes noticeably more positive during the exile years. His first visit to America - recorded in Quer Durch and therefore quite deliberately contrasted with the Russian impressions - had taken place in 1929. Toller's Amerikanische Reisebilder are as faultfinding as one might expect from a socialist writer: because he concentrates on the lot of the oppressed, such as assembly line workers and blacks, and on the fate of suspiciously regarded socialists; because he casts a critical eye over the banality of Hollywood and the crass materialism

evident throughout American society, the picture is rather negative. By the late Thirties this attitude has changed considerably, because Toller perceives a change within the United States themselves. In 1937 he wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru:

America has undergone a tremendous change since I was here last in 1929. The great economic crisis has influenced the people, particularly the youth of the country deeply. In place of banal optimism, with its idolatry of the Dollar, one notices now a deep spiritual unrest, an inclination toward the real social problems and a desire for truth in the social sphere as well as in art.⁶⁶

Toller had in fact predicted such a change within American society in 1930. Commenting on literature in the United States, Toller is initially very critical of the commercial - rather than artistic - standards by which a writer is assessed: "Wenn ein Autor hohe Auflagen erzielt hat, wenn er best-seller geworden ist, wenn man weiß, daß er so und soviel 'wert ist'⁶⁷ - dann, erst dann öffnen sich ihm die Spalten sämtlicher Zeitungen sofort."⁶⁸ Yet Toller is cautiously optimistic and believes a change may already be occurring (although he stresses that generally, the American writer is a fully integrated member of bourgeois society, and that writers like Upton Sinclair are frowned upon):

Es kann sein, daß sich hierin einiges in der nächsten Zeit ändert. Es gibt unter der Jugend eine Strömung, die nicht mehr den kaufmännischen, sondern den geistigen Erfolg eines Schriftstellers will. Diese Jugend rekrutiert sich aus den Studenten und, in geringerem Grade, aus der schmalen und einflußlosen Schicht aufgeklärter Arbeiter. [...] Möglich, daß die offenbar jetzt beginnende ökonomische Krisenperiode diese, wie so manche politische und moralische Wandlung beschleunigen wird.⁶⁹

Toller appears to have had considerable admiration for Roosevelt - for whom Kaiser has nothing but scorn throughout his letters⁷⁰ - and appealed directly to the American President for financial aid for refugees of the Spanish Civil War, reminding Roosevelt of the democratic ideals which form the basis of the American Constitution. (GW I, pp. 214-215). We shall see that Toller's turn away from the Soviet Union and towards the United States runs parallel to a public moderation of his ideological outlook.

As we have seen, Kaiser became very disillusioned with the Western democracies after the outbreak of the Second World War; he believed these Western powers had left Poland stranded in 1939. Although Kaiser later confesses admiration for the way the Soviets turned the tide of war against the Nazis on the Eastern Front, Julius Marx records him as saying in March 1941: "Allein die Sowjetunion bot eine Hoffnung. Doch dann zerstörte Stalin den Hoffnungsschimmer."⁷¹ Thus Kaiser, like Toller, initially looked to the East for opposition to fascism, but was disappointed by Stalin's degradation of the Revolution. Unlike Toller though, he does not turn to the West; he sees Britain, America and Germany as an unholy trinity of philistines: "[...] diese gegen die Kultur vereinten Hunde Nazismus Churchill Roosevelt..." (Briefe, p. 999). Instead, he continues to see the Soviet Union in a positive light. He may well have been influenced by his friend Julius Marx here, who always defends the USSR in his letters to Kaiser. Marx believes, as Toller had in 1934, that the artist is highly regarded in the Soviet Union, though he concedes that Stalin's leadership has meant the country has become less progressive: "In keinem Land steht die Kunst so hoch im Kurs, nirgends wird für das Wohlergehen des Künstlers so gesorgt

wie bei den Bolschewisten (was sie übrigens schon längst nicht mehr sind)."⁷² Kaiser agrees - "Sie haben recht: Rußland ist die Hoffnung," (Briefe, p. 1000) - and is impressed by Russian successes on the battlefield after the collapse of the Non-Aggression Pact and the German invasion of the Soviet Union. He asks Marx jokingly: "Warum gibt man den Briten und Amerikanern keine russischen Generäle?"⁷³ (Briefe, p. 1007).

Nevertheless, Kaiser's attitude towards America does, paradoxically, become more positive, despite his persistent attacks on the Western Allies' leadership. Much of this bitterness was doubtless motivated by the Zürich consul's refusal to grant Kaiser an American visa. (Briefe, p. 1009). Kaiser is quick to point out the hypocrisy of the Americans: "Während unentwegt der USA Präsident vom Schutz der Demokratie litaneit, schlagen seine Beamten jedem Demokraten, der um Schutz fleht, hohngeifernd die Tür ihres Landes vor die Nase zu." (Briefe, pp. 652-653). In Quer Durch Toller relates, with similar acidity, his encounter with American immigration authorities on Ellis Island: "Die Herren beraten miteinander und verkünden nach einigen Minuten, ich dürfe das Land der Freiheit unter der Voraussetzung betreten, daß ich mich nicht mit amerikanischer Politik befasse."⁷⁴

During the Weimar years America, as a rising capitalist industrial power, aroused considerable interest in Germany. As Robert Kauf points out in his article "Georg Kaiser, der Amerikanismus und Amerika", several dramatists, such as Brecht and Feuchtwanger, used America to symbolise the materialism and moral bankruptcy of industrial mass civilisation.⁷⁵ In the late Twenties, Toller also saw Germany taking on negative American

cultural values, although he was perfectly prepared to acknowledge positive influences emanating from the other side of the Atlantic:

Zweifellos übt auf die jüngsten deutschen Dramatiker Amerika Einfluß aus, aber der deutsche Amerikanismus stützt sich nicht auf die paar führenden, großen Geister Amerikas. Was übernommen wird, ist: Tempo, banaler Optimismus, Beziehungslosigkeit, kurz, jene 'neue Sachlichkeit', die mit Nähe zu Menschen und Dingen wenig zu tun hat. (GW I, pp. 129-130).

Karl Thomas is released from the sanatorium to find a Weimar society obsessed with technological speed and sensation. In the radio play 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!', the American film star Lia Lora promotes herself by professing to admire Goethe, Wagner and Hindenburg, about whom she knows not the slightest thing.⁷⁶ In the late Twenties, as Kauf points out,⁷⁷ Kaiser was influenced by the interest in American culture, and wrote plays set in the United States: Zwei Krawatten (1929) and Mississippi. Zwei Krawatten, with its fast-moving revue style and sentimental happy-end, reflects pre-depression well-off society's craving for excitement and entertainment. While Kaiser is doubtless catering to popular demand in Zwei Krawatten, this does not stop him from casting a satirical eye over American society, which is portrayed as materialistic, hypocritically puritanical,⁷⁸ and above all anti-intellectual; Mabel describes Jean as a European with tact, because: "Er hat nicht einmal von Goethe und Beethoven gesprochen." (Werke III, p. 140). This portrayal of America, despite its lightheartedness, is similar to Toller's ideas about Americanism in the Twenties. America is also the setting for Mississippi, though as Kauf points out, this play is based on an historical event. Citing newspaper articles which report on the willingness of 2,000 men to defend their land by force against

flooding, even at the enormous cost of flooding New Orleans, Kauf concludes: "We see then that Kaiser's portrayal of American commercialism is not based on any Amerikanismus clichés, but fairly accurately reflects perceived real sentiments."⁷⁹ However, surely the fact that such commercialism existed could only validate the criticism inherent in what Kauf refers to dismissively as "Amerikanismus clichés"? In any case, as shown in Chapters I and II, Mississippi is one of Kaiser's most biting attacks on capitalism, and it is surely not without significance that one of the few plays he wrote in which capitalism is portrayed as the root of imperialism, is set in America. Kauf concludes that Kaiser's view of America is not very negative because the events in Mississippi actually happened; in fact Kaiser builds on these events in order to present a critical picture of American ideals. Kauf omits Zweimal Oliver from his discussion, presumably because this play is not even partially set in America. Yet one of Oliver's fellow patients in the sanatorium of the final scene is a telling caricature of a capitalist, a figure who identifies his mad plans for economic domination of the world with America: "Von jetzt an existiert nur noch Amerika. Ich bin der erste Präsident des Universalstaats von Amerika auf Aktien! [...] Amerika den Amerikanern und den Amerikanern der Globus!" (Werke II, p. 518). This play was also written in the latter half of the Weimar years, in 1926. We can safely conclude that Kaiser's view of America was not positive in the Twenties.

We have seen that Kaiser often attacks the Western democracies in his letters from the exile years, accusing them of dragging their heels in the war. These attacks are reserved for the leadership of these countries, however, and Churchill and Roosevelt are often the

targets of Kaiser's venom. Kaiser also felt cheated out of what he believed to be vast riches awaiting him in the United States, once he was permitted to emigrate, and naturally felt very despondent at having to remain in Switzerland. Nonetheless, the view of America as a whole becomes more positive, despite these disappointments. As the destruction and carnage of the War dragged on, Kaiser began to look increasingly to the culture of the New World for positive values. In 1941, according to his letters, his attitude appeared to be ambiguous; while he was still cherishing hopes that he might yet be allowed to go to America, he saw that country as the new home of art and culture: "Ich habe die letzten Bindungen abgestreift, die mich an Herkunft und Tradition fesselten. Eine neue Kunst und Kultur entsteht. Ich halte mich für einen der besten Mitarbeiter dieser neuen Welt im Geiste." (Briefe, p. 610). Five months later, in October 1941, he wrote to Julius Marx: "Wo stehen wir? Europa ist am Ende und Amerika ist kein Anfang." (Briefe, p. 666). In between these two quotations lie the disappointing bureaucratic entanglements with the American Consulate, which in themselves prompted Kaiser to remark sarcastically: "Wie kam eigentlich Kolumbus nach Amerika? Damals gab es wohl noch kein Züricher Konsulat," and to dismiss America out of hand: "Diese Welt ist triste genug - niemals hätte Amerika entdeckt werden dürfen." (Briefe, p. 620). All these statements are affected by Kaiser's desire and subsequent failure to obtain a visa. As European countries began to fall to Nazi aggression, Kaiser put his personal bitterness aside, and praised America's cultural achievements. While Toller sees the depression as having brought people to their senses in America (see quotation no. 66 above), Kaiser, turning his back on the desolation in Europe, sees America as the new guardian of civilisation and art; impressed

by Steinbeck's The Moon is Down, he wrote to von Arx in October 1942:

Die Kunst ist aus Europa ausgewandert und hat sich in Amerika angesiedelt. [...] Es wird in Europa kein Werk mehr wie Der Mond geht unter geschrieben. Aber in Amerika werden weiter solche Werke - Kunst und Charakter in einem - verfaßt werden. [...] Amerika ist alles - Europa ist nichts mehr. (Briefe, p. 795).

This optimistic view of America's role in a post-war world is confirmed in Napoleon in New Orleans. Dergan, taught a moral lesson by Youyou's gang of swindlers, undergoes a tremendous transformation. Instead of seeing in America the natural home of the newly-risen Emperor Napoleon, he predicts the rise of a non-aggressive power, which gains its strength from everything that is positive and vital in all cultures, and which will replace the dying European culture:

Ich sehe sehr weit und was ich unterscheide
- aus Nebel sich näher rückend - das ist
Amerika. ---- Entsinnst du dich der Sage,
als sie den Turm von Babel errichten wollten?
Die Völker aber verstanden einander nicht
und nie gelang der Turm. Hier wird ein
Volk sein, das mit einer Sprache die Fremdheit
überbrückt und Bauten fügt - so hoch wie
nie vorher erstanden. [...] Die neue Erde
für ein neues Menschentum, das sich vom
Blutstrom aller Völker speist: Amerika!
---- (Werke III, pp. 633-634).

Thus both Toller and Kaiser come to view the United States in a more positive light after taking a critical view in the Twenties. We shall see that Toller becomes less critical of capitalism during his years in exile (apart from in Nie wieder Friede!), and was no doubt careful not to offend the countries in which he lived during these years, from whom he expected solidarity for the victims of Nazism. However, privately Toller let it be known that he was far from happy in America;

Christopher Isherwood remembers him saying that he hated New York, though this was admittedly shortly before Toller's suicide.⁸⁰ (FT, p. 227).

Kaiser's attitude remains a little ambiguous, though. He was disillusioned by the hypocrisy he perceived within the leadership of the West, but nevertheless saw America, with its multi-national culture, as the natural place for internationalist ideas to come to fruition. His criticism during the exile years is confined to private letters. While he was never permitted to live in the United States, he certainly wished to do so, and consequently felt, perhaps like Toller, too inhibited to criticise America publicly. The direct criticism of capitalism found in some of the works of the Weimar years is not evident in the exile plays. We have seen that this criticism is often linked to America in these plays of the Twenties, so Kaiser also becomes more restrained about the economic system epitomised within the United States. While he portrays capitalists who are opportunistic and lacking in morals, such as the publishers Koepfer and Suhrke in Klawitter, there is no equivalent in Kaiser's exile plays to Laban, the representative of the bourgeois capitalist order which produces fascism in Nie wieder Friede!, with the possible exception of the moneyed aristocrat Baron Dergan.

Both Toller and Kaiser express admiration for the Soviet Union; Toller, evidently disappointed by the shape Stalin's leadership took on after the beginning of the purges, is however silent on that country during the last years of his life. As we have seen (quotation no. 71 above), Kaiser actually referred to Stalin's terror in a conversation with Julius Marx, but impressed presumably by the tenacity with which Soviet troops

repulsed the invaders, saw the Russian war effort as an example to the Western powers. Toller did not live long enough to witness the War, but though Kaiser was able to follow events on the Eastern Front, there is much more evidence of his looking to post-war America as a leading force for the future, despite his admiration - which finds no echoes in his plays of the time - for the USSR.

Notes.

1. It is quite possible that Toller occasionally thought too much of his time was taken up by extra-literary activities, but that he felt morally bound to use his energies and talents in this way. In a letter (dated 24 December 1938) to the American Guild for German Cultural Freedom, Toller wrote: "Sie wissen ja, daß ich seit fünf Monaten ausschließlich mich mit der spanischen Hilfsaktion befaßt habe und ich muß nun, da diese Aktion erfreulicherweise sich zu verwirklichen scheint, an meine eigene Arbeit denken. Aber wenn ich der Guild helfen kann, will ich es gerne tun." (Unpublished letter, Deutsches Exilarchiv, Deutsche Bibliothek, Frankfurt a. M.).

2. On 23 May 1938, Toller wrote the following to the American Guild: "Kaiser was doubtless one of the outstanding playwrights [sic] of our epoch. His plays have been translated into many languages and had a great influence on authors like Elmer Rice, Clifford Odett [sic], O'Casey and others. Sevréal [sic] plays by him have been produced in America. He never could leave Germany. The Nazis took away his passport. In these days a letter reached the Querido Verlag, Amsterdam, that he at last has an opportunity to emigrate. It would be necessary to support him in the first month of exile. I am convinced that he will find soon an opportunity of establishing himself outside of Germany." On 21 July 1938, about a month after Kaiser had fled from Grünheide to the Netherlands, Toller sent a cable to the American Guild: "Georg Kaiser outstanding playwright now destitute Amsterdam immediate help urgent please wire whole amount voted scholarship ninety dollar Querido Verlag Amsterdam." On 28 July 1938 the Guild wrote to Toller confirming the granting of a scholarship. (All these documents are contained in the Deutsches Exilarchiv, Deutsche Bibliothek, Frankfurt a. M.).

3. Anonymous editorial. In: The Scotsman, 21 June 1934, p. 10.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. When Toller spoke as an independent delegate at the Ragusa PEN Club Congress in May 1933, the official German delegation protested by returning to Germany; the Austrian, Swiss and Dutch delegations joined the protest and also walked out of the conference hall.

7. See for example Kenworthy, B.J.: "Die Dramen 1928-1945: Apotheose der Subjektivität". In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 129; Huder, Walter: "Nachwort". In: Werke VI, pp. 831-832.

8. Petersen, Klaus: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 101: "Diese Übereinstimmung des Künstlers mit dem Steuermann unterstreicht, daß der Bildhauer, anders als die Künstler der expressionistischen Periode nicht den Menschen als überlegenes Wesen vorangestellt, sondern einer der ihren, ja die Verkörperung bürgerlicher Tugend ist."

9. Toller: "The Modern Writer and the Future of Europe". In: The Bookman, Vol. LXXXV, January 1934, p. 380.

10. See for example GW I, pp. 136-137.

11. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to believe that Toller's sole criterion when judging other writers was their degree of political involvement. In a letter to the American Guild for German Cultural Freedom, Toller suggests setting up a committee of German writers to judge the value of potential scholarship recipients, and adds: "In case you choose me as a member of this committee I have to admit that, if I have to choose between two persons of the [sic] about the same qualities and both are 'second-rate' writers I shall choose the man who seems to me as character [sic] more valuable. If the one is a writer and an active Anti-Nazi with great moral attitude, he may be Catholic or conservative or communist, and the other is just a writer who writes f.e. the averidge magazin-stories [sic], I shall give my vote to the active person. If one of them is an active Anti-Nazi but a poor writer and the other is not active but a literary master, I shall vote for the great master as a member of the Guild." (Unpublished letter dated 10 September 1938, Deutsches Exilarchiv, Deutsche Bibliothek, Frankfurt a. M.).

12. Rolland, Romain: Au dessus de la mêlée. Ollendorf, Paris 1915, p. 57.

13. At the PEN Club Congress in Ragusa in 1933, Toller distinguished between the new rulers of Germany and the ideals which they had quite falsely managed to exploit: "Man wird mir in Deutschland vorwerfen, daß ich gegen Deutschland gesprochen habe. Das ist nicht wahr. Ich wende mich gegen die Methoden der Männer, die heute Deutschland regieren, die aber keine Legitimation besitzen, sich und Deutschland gleichzusetzen. Millionen Menschen in Deutschland dürfen nicht frei reden und frei schreiben. Wenn ich hier spreche, spreche ich

mit für diese Millionen, die heute keine Stimme haben. Die Herren berufen sich auf die großen deutschen Geister. Wie sind die geistigen Forderungen Goethes, Schillers, Kleists, Herders, Wielands, Lessings vereinbar mit der Verfolgung von Millionen Menschen?" (GW I, p. 172).

14. At times Toller seems unduly optimistic about the artist's influence, as in a birthday message to Lion Feuchtwanger: "Andere mögen den großen Romancier feiern, ich will den Mann beglückwünschen, der in Zeiten der Erniedrigung die Stimme des moralischen Mutes war, der Verfolgung und Ächtung nicht fürchtete, der großartig bewies, daß die Stimme eines Menschen stärker sein kann, als der stärkste Radiosender eines verratenen Landes." (Toller: "Glückwunsch an Lion Feuchtwanger". In: Die Sammlung, Vol. I, No. 11, November 1934, p. 570).

15. Toller was to stress this point again, when comparing the fates of previous German exiles to those of the 1930's, in a piece posthumously published as "The Last Testament of Ernst Toller": "Nowadays the dictator is very often, even outside his country, so very powerful that booksellers no longer dare to offer books written by the exponent of the spirit banished by the dictator, theaters to perform his works, art galleries to exhibit a free painter's pictures." (GW I, p. 270).

16. Christa Wolf comes to the optimistic conclusion that writing can have a positive effect on others, when considering the fates of the anti-fascist Munich students Hans and Sophie Scholl, who were executed in 1943. The Scholls were decisively influenced by books and writers, Wolf notes, and she continues: "Falls also Zweifel in mir aufkommen wollen, ob denn die Bemühung, aus dem eigenen Zentrum heraus zu schreiben, auch für andere sinnvoll sein könnte: diese Literaturbesessenheit, dieser Ernst, mit dem beide geistige Nahrung aus - damals natürlich zumeist verbotenen - Büchern sogen, muß diesen Zweifel mildern." (Wolf, Christa: "Erinnerung, die Scham erweckt. Rede zur Verleihung des Geschwister-Scholl-Preises der Stadt München". In: Süddeutsche Zeitung, Vol. XLIII, No. 270, 24 November 1987, p. 34).

17. Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 29. Julius Marx' book has been the subject of much discussion among critics, some of whom see it as a legitimate source, such as Huder and Petersen - the latter with reservations -, while others reject it as unreliable, such as Schürer. In his paper, "Georg Kaiser and Julius Marx: Some Thoughts on their Friendship and on Marx' Bericht in Tagebuchform",

Richard C. Helt concludes that while Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen is not a scholarly work, the "sketchily formulated" statements attributed to Kaiser are "no more lacking in organisation and consistency than the collection of pre-exile essays..." (In: Symposium, p. 192). Kaiser made contradictory statements about drama and art in the 1920's, and negative and positive statements about art's validity co-exist in the letters from the period 1933-38. Thus it would seem perfectly possible that he made verbal statements which contradicted the letters he wrote while in Switzerland. Several parts of Marx' controversial book accurately reflect some of the preoccupations of Kaiser's letters from the late Thirties and Forties, such as his suicide intentions, his impecunity and his bitter, rather spiteful attitude toward the Western democracies. Quite apart from this, Kaiser's most bitter condemnations of art took place in 1941; we shall see that 1943 was a watershed year for Kaiser, in which he turned his back on reality and sought solace in his art. While Petersen has certain reservations about Marx' account, he appears to accept the "Gespräche mit Julius Marx", which Huder includes in Werke IV (pp. 610-627), but which are taken straight from Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen. Marx' work certainly gives us considerable insights into Kaiser's wartime political views. Many of Kaiser's letters to Marx revolve around politics. Kaiser himself admitted that when he discussed politics, it was chiefly with Marx; in 1940 Kaiser wrote to him: "Sie sind mein Halt und Hort in der Politik und müssen mich anhören." (Briefe, p. 516).

18. Kaiser admits, in the same letter, that a dream about Büchner's Woyzeck has restored his courage.

19. Kenworthy writes, for example: "In Pferdewechsel erlebt Napoleon Kaisers eigene existentielle Verzweiflung. Napoleons frühere Erfolge sind Kaisers Erfolge; so wie die Herbergswirtin an Napoleon glaubt, so glaubt ein Teil der Kunstbeflissenen an Kaiser. Wie Napoleon, so würde auch Kaiser eines Tages im Triumph aus der Verbannung zurückkehren." ("Die Dramen 1928-1945..." In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 134). Only Ernst Schürer, while acknowledging Napoleon's status as a Nietzschean Übermensch, alludes briefly to the dubious political implications of Marie's devotion to Napoleon. ("Verinnerlichung, Protest und Resignation. Georg Kaiser's Exil". In: Durzak, Manfred (ed.): Die deutsche Exilliteratur 1933-1945, Reclam, Stuttgart 1973, p. 267).

20. Wolfgang Paulsen overlooks this point when he explains Kaiser's admiration for Napoleon in Pferdewechsel: "Der Widerspruch löst sich erst auf, wenn man erkennt,

daß Kaiser in Napoleon nicht in erster Linie den General und überhaupt nicht einen gewissenlosen Machtpolitiker sah, sondern das in der Geschichte einmalig sichtbar gewordene schöpferische Prinzip, den Übermenschen aus Fleisch und Blut." (Paulsen: Georg Kaiser. Die Perspektiven seines Werkes, p. 107). This may well have been Kaiser's intention: nevertheless, it remains unsatisfying that he chose Napoleon, who inspires blind devotion in order to conquer - "So laßt uns schweigen und unseren Fahnen folgen!" (Werke VI, p. 241) -, to represent the superman.

21. This statement by Napoleon was originally recorded by Count Emanuel Las Cases in his Mémorial de Sainte Hélène I, (2 vols.), Garnier, Paris 1961, p. 525.

22. Las Cases: Mémorial II, pp. 344-345.

23. Herold, J. Christopher (ed.): The Mind of Napoleon. A Selection from his Written and Spoken Words. Columbia Univ., New York 1955, p. 76.

24. Las Cases: Mémorial II, p. 7.

25. In Nie wieder Friede!, Napoleon tells St. Francis dismissively that he had theorised about the sword and the spirit whilst in exile: "Diesen Satz schrieb ich am Ende meiner Tage. Am Ende meiner Taten. Auf Sankt Helena." (GW III, p. 190). According to J. Christopher Herold, however, (Note 23), Napoleon made the remark in conversation in 1808.

26. Schürer: "Verinnerlichung, Protest und Resignation...", p. 266.

27. Huder, Walter: "Nachwort". In: Die Gasgesellschaft. Illegale Flugblätter. Berliner Handpresse, Berlin 1969, n.p.

28. It is therefore not quite correct to present Die Gasgesellschaft as the result of a decisive and uncompromising anti-fascist standpoint, as Ralf Schnell does: "Es ist dies vor allem die Erfahrung einer vollständigen gesellschaftlichen Isolation im Dritten Reich: die literarischen und politischen Beschränkungen, die offizielle Auslöschung seiner Existenz als Autor schneiden Kaiser, da er den Weg ins Exil ebenso wie eine Integration in die faschistische Kulturpolitik ablehnt, von jeder öffentlichen Kommunikation ab." (Schnell, Ralf: "Georg Kaiser: Die Gasgesellschaft". In: Literarische innere Emigration. Metzlersche Verlagsbuchhandlung, Stuttgart 1976, pp. 161-162).

29. See for example, Huder: "Nachwort", Werke VI, p. 835, and Schürer: "Verinnerlichung, Protest und Resignation...", p. 272.

30. Kenworthy: "Die Dramen 1928-1945...", LGW-Interpretationen 49, pp. 134-135.

31. Petersen: Georg Kaiser: Künstlerbild und Künstlerfigur, p. 108.

32. Wolfgang Paulsen points out that the ambiguity of Hoff's play shows that Kaiser failed to think his ideas through in Klawitter. (Paulsen: "Georg Kaiser im expressionistischen Raum. Zum Problem einer Neudeutung seines Werkes". In: Monatshefte, Vol. L, No. 6, November 1958, pp. 297-298).

33. Huder: "Georg Kaiser - Dramatik und Dramaturgie". In: Symposium, p. 19.

34. Bütow: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werke Ernst Tollers, p. 393.

35. Toller: "Das beste Buch des Jahres". In: Aufruf, Vol. IV, Nos. 6/7, 20 December 1933, p. 177.

36. Kaiser wrote this letter to Julius Marx. Marx, however, was somewhat critical of Kaiser's reluctance to view art consistently as a weapon (at the time Marx was trying to persuade Kaiser to help with a drama about resistance to Nazism in Germany, called Pikaß): "Sie sind ein großer Dichter, vielleicht der größte unsrer Zeit. Wenn Sie schweigen, wo Sie mit Donnerstimme reden könnten, dann stellen Sie sich in die Reihe derer, die man, wenn das große Reinemachen kommt, auf den Kehrrichthaufen der (Literatur)-Geschichte werfen wird. Das darf nicht sein! Ich, der ich wie kaum jemand, in der Zeit der Emigration Ihnen nahe stand, werde einmal - wenn ich am Leben bleibe - wie kaum jemand für Sie zeugen müssen; ich möchte dann sagen können: Georg Kaiser ist nicht nur ein großer Dichter, er war auch ein tapferer Kämpfer. Sein Ziel war der Triumph der geistigen Tat." (Unpublished letter dated 11 September 1942, GKA).

37. Toller: "A British Free People's Theatre". In: New Statesman and Nation, Vol. XII, 12 September 1936, p. 350.

38. Toller: "The Modern Writer and the Future of Europe". In: The Bookman, Vol. LXXXV, January 1934, p. 380.

39. Brecht sums up this rejection of rationalised barbarity in his 1933 poem, "Gegen die Objektiven":

"Wenn die Kämpfer gegen das Unrecht besiegt sind / Hat das Unrecht doch nicht recht!!" (Brecht, Bertolt: Gesammelte Werke in acht Bänden IV, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1967, p. 492).

40. In January 1933 Kaiser wrote to Julius Marx: "Meine dramatische Laufbahn betrachte ich als beendet. Ich erinnere mich noch hier und da an meine Leistungen, die mich nicht in den Glanz, sondern in die schwärzeste Nacht geführt haben. Nach Bezahlung der wichtigsten Schulden verabschiede ich mich in das Nichts." (Briefe, p. 825).

41. Marx, Julius: Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen. Alles in einem Leben. Ein Bericht in Tagebuchform. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh 1970, p. 84.

42. Ibid., p. 80.

43. Ibid., p. 81.

44. Ibid.

45. We have seen that Kaiser occasionally underestimates Nazism in his letters; the most obvious example of this is his feeling that working conditions in Germany are suddenly improving. (Briefe, p. 839 - this is quoted on p. 254 above).

46. Toller: "The Modern Writer and the Future of Europe". In: The Bookman, Vol. LXXXV, January 1934, p. 382.

47. Toller: Die Feuer-Kantate. In: Das Wort, Vol. III, No. 6, June 1938, pp. 35-36.

48. Marx, Julius: Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen, p. 88. To a certain extent Kaiser contradicts himself in this conversation with Marx. After dismissing both the government of Nazi Germany and those of the Western democracies as barbaric and decadent respectively, Kaiser admits he has a certain admiration for the Soviet Union. However, Stalin soon destroyed any hopes of a better society, Kaiser concludes: "Stalin hat das Erbe Lenins vergewaltigt." (Marx, p. 88). Kaiser is implying here that a corrupt minority can impose its will upon a majority, and that the stupidity of the masses which he speaks of a little earlier cannot be blamed entirely for political leaders.

49. Ibid., p. 84.

50. Toller: "Abschiedsworte von Ernst Toller an Paul

Grätz". In: Das Wort, Vol. II, No. 6, June 1937, p. 102.

51. Toller: "Sind wir verantwortlich für unsere Zeit?" In: Spalek, John M. and Frühwald, Wolfgang: "Ernst Tollers amerikanische Vortragsreise 1936/37". In: Literaturwissenschaftliches Jahrbuch im Auftrag der Görres-Gesellschaft, Neue Folge, VI, 1965, p. 278. (Hereafter referred to as LWJB VI). Three versions of this speech are published here by Spalek and Frühwald, the third of which is in English and was originally published in the American periodical The Saturday Review in 1944.

52. Ibid., p. 280.

53. Ibid.

54. Ibid., p. 284.

55. Ibid., p. 282. Toller describes various democratic mass movements, including the fight for trade union rights and the women's movement.

56. Elsewhere Toller had asserted that 'instincts' are not innate, and can therefore be bred: "Lernen wir, in uns, in unsern Kindern sozialistische Instinkte züchten - man kann Instinkte züchten -...." (GW I, p. 163).

57. LWJB VI, p. 290.

58. Ibid., p. 300.

59. Calvié, Alain: "Ernest Toller et Léon Trotsky. Cinq lettres inédites". In: Cahiers d'études germaniques, Vol. VII, 1983, pp. 244-245. The letter quoted is dated 17 November 1933. Toller expresses a similar concern about Nazi propaganda abroad, when he corrects an article in the New Statesman and Nation which had reported - with insufficient regard for detail he felt - on the Memel Trial. (At this trial, Nazi conspirators, who had killed one of their own officials they had suspected of treachery, were sentenced to death by Lithuanians; Nazi indignation was subsequently aroused). Toller feels it necessary to explain the facts of the case as "otherwise a false impression will be made on British public opinion - a similar impression to that which the Nazis have deliberately fostered in Germany, in order to whip up a hatred of Lithuania among uninformed Germans." (Toller: "The Memel Trial". In: New Statesman and Nation, Vol. IX, No. 217, 20 April 1935, p. 549.

60. Toller pleaded for international pressure on behalf of the victims of Nazism: "There is only one way to help them, namely, the incessant voice of public opinion in free democracies. The cases of Dimitrov and Ossietzky have shown that our fight is not hopeless if we wage it strongly and unremittingly." (Toller: "A Communication. The Meaning of the André Trial". In: The New Republic, Vol. LXXXIX, No. 1154, 13 January 1937, p. 332). Ossietzky was indeed released from concentration camp by the Nazis after winning the 1936 Nobel Peace Prize, but was kept under Gestapo observation in a Berlin hospital until he died in 1938.

61. Marx: Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen, p. 88.

62. Julius Marx often felt Kaiser attacked the Western leaders too much, and consequently neglected Nazi crimes: "Sie kommen mir oft vor wie jemand, der die politische Landschaft mit einem verkehrten Fernglas betrachtet, aller besseren Erkenntnis zum Trotz. Aus dem größten Verbrecher der Welt- und Kriminalgeschichte machen Sie einen Minimalverbrecher, - die größten Verbrecher aber sind für Sie Roosevelt und Churchill! Außerhalb Deutschlands gibt es wohl nur ganz wenig Verblendete, die mit Ihnen gleicher Ansicht sind." (Unpublished letter dated 24 January 1943, GKA).

63. Toller criticises the emerging Lenin cult and the silence over Trotsky in Quer Durch. Nevertheless, Toller's own socialist outlook and his great sympathy for the Russian experiment mean that the picture of the Soviet Union in Quer Durch is far more favourable than that of the United States - which Spalek believes to be superficial. (Spalek, John M.: "Ernst Toller: The Need for a New Estimate". In: The German Quarterly, Vol. XXXIX, No. 4, 1966, p. 590). Toller's criticism may be quite harsh, but it is not superficial. His pieces are short but concise, and are not lacking in facts and figures. He looks at the high but precarious standard of living among factory workers, for example, citing their average income (Quer Durch, p. 15). The chapter on workers at Ford is a similarly detailed piece of reportage (pp. 20-27), and a section on the lynching of blacks is backed up by press reports (pp. 76-78).

64. Toller: "Stalin and Wells; A Comment by Ernst Toller." In: New Statesman and Nation, Vol. VIII, 3 November 1934, pp. 614-615.

65. Toller: "Schriftsteller über die Sowjetunion und über die Sowjetliteratur". In: Aktionen, Bekenntnisse, Perspektiven. Berichte und Dokumente vom Kampf um die Freiheit des literarischen Schaffens in der Weimarer

Republik. (Deutsche Akademie der Künste zu Berlin, ed.). Aufbau, Berlin & Weimar 1966, p. 523. (Originally published in Internationale Literatur, Vol. IV, No. 3, 1934, pp. 150-151).

66. Nehru, Jawaharlal: A Bunch of Old Letters. Asia, London 1960, p. 229. Toller reiterated similar sentiments to reporters in San Francisco the same year: "'When I was here six years ago America found its god in the dollar. [...] That attitude is changed. Today I feel that the best of Europe may be saved in America. I see here the awakening of a social conscience and a social consciousness. I feel that liberty no longer stands a stone image at the harbor of New York, but grows in the heart and intellect of your people.'" (Anon.: "'Germany is Brewing War!' Hitler-Hater Flays Naziland Leaders. Toller, Famous Scholar, Hails U.S. as 'Eden'". In: San Francisco Chronicle, 14 January 1937, p. 5).

67. This expression echoes an experience Toller recounts in Quer Durch: upon his arrival in America he is asked by journalists what Gerhart Hauptmann is 'worth'. When Toller begins to say a few words about Hauptmann's plays, the journalist interrupts and asks how much Hauptmann actually earns.

68. Toller: "Toller über die Literatur in Amerika". In: Die literarische Welt, Vol. VI, No. 3, 17 January 1930, p. 1.

69. Ibid.

70. Roosevelt and Churchill are repeatedly referred to in derogatory terms in Kaiser's letters. See for example, Briefe, p. 830 & p. 999.

71. Marx, Julius: Georg Kaiser, ich und die anderen, p. 88.

72. Marx, Julius: unpublished letter dated 20 October 1943, GKA.

73. Some eighteen months earlier, in November 1942, Kaiser had no such admiration for the Red Army: "Europa wird niemals von den Nazis gesäubert werden. Das schafft dieser Stalin nicht, der sich mit seinen Bolsheviken, die sich seit zwanzig Jahren rüsten, in seinen Städten versteckt. An einen russischen Angriff ist nicht zu denken - den wehren ein paar deutsche Invaliden ab." (Briefe, p. 807).

74. Quer Durch, p. 13.

75. Kauf, Robert: "Georg Kaiser, der Amerikanismus und Amerika". In: Symposium, p. 253.

76. Toller: 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' In: Frühe sozialistische Hörspiele, pp. 102-103.

77. Kauf: "Georg Kaiser, der Amerikanismus und Amerika", p. 254. Kauf also includes Der mutige Seefahrer in his discussion of Americanism in Kaiser's plays of the Twenties, apparently unaware that Seefahrer, though first published in 1926, was first written in 1910.

78. Puritanical morality is represented by Senator MacCarton, a public supporter of prohibition, whom Jean knows to be a drunk and a philanderer. Toller also sees an obsession in America with puritanism; in Quer Durch he notes that an English dentist does not fulfil the moral standards set by the immigration authorities: "Irgend jemand hatte der Behörde denunziert, daß mit dem Schiff, mit dem er gekommen, auch seine Freundin (in eigener Kabine) gereist sei. Beide durften wegen 'moral turpitude', moralischer Verworfenheit, den amerikanischen Boden nicht betreten." (Quer Durch, p. 13).

79. Kauf: "Georg Kaiser, der Amerikanismus und Amerika", p. 257.

80. The full-length version of Isherwood's character sketch, entitled The Head of a Leader, appeared in Encounter Vol. I, No. 1, 1953, pp. 29-33. Isherwood admits, on the final page of this sketch, that he is unable to recall how much of his portrayal of Toller was fact and how much fiction.

Chapter V

IDEOLOGICAL REGRESSION?

Critics have detected developments in the exile work of both Toller and Kaiser which would seem to show parallel reactions to the Nazi threat: Toller's work begins to emphasise an anti-fascist position - based on the defence of basic democratic and human rights - as opposed to socialist ideals,¹ whereas Kaiser's work has been seen as tending to concentrate on attacking war and militarism, rather than the divisive and repressive system which perpetuates it, which takes on central importance in Tanaka.² We shall see that there is indeed a shift of emphasis in Toller's work, whereas the writing Kaiser completed during his first five years in Switzerland actually takes on a far more political tone than ever before. It will not only become evident that many of Kaiser's plays address the order which causes war, but that his stories in particular expound revolutionary ideas which are found only in Toller's pre-exile work. The political character of Kaiser's exile work changed suddenly in 1943 however, and once again became more introspective.

There can be no question that Toller's post-1933 work concentrates on the fight against fascism rather than for socialism. Several critics believe that Toller had already become disillusioned with socialism before 1933. Hermann Kesten writes that Toller was no longer a revolutionary after his release from prison, a remark which, in the light of Hoppla, wir leben! and Feuer aus den Kesseln can hardly be taken seriously.³ Richard Dove believes that 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' marks a turning point in Toller's ideological development,

because, although the play is stylistically close to Feuer aus den Kesseln, the revolutionary optimism of the latter gives way to "melancholic resignation".⁴ Dove quotes Emil Ludwig, who claims Toller was given a new political purpose by Nazism: "Als er ganz vage zu irrelieftelieren schien, kam ihm Hitler zu Hilfe, gab ihm einen neuen Feind, eine Arena."⁵ Altenhofer also believes that after 1930, Toller could no longer have faith in the working-class "als Gegenkraft zum Faschismus."⁶ This trend certainly seems to have been borne out by Toller's drama during the early 1930's: Wunder in Amerika and Die blinde Göttin are not plays about proletarian problems. Nevertheless, Altenhofer bases her conclusion entirely on Toller's plays; for both publicly and privately Toller reiterated his faith in the workers during the final years of Weimar. In Die Rote Fahne of 30 July 1931 he wrote: "Außer der revolutionären Arbeiterschaft ist keine Macht imstande, den Kampf aufzunehmen. Wir müssen in ihren Reihen kämpfen."⁷ In 1932 he stated quite categorically that he believed the working-class, via the trade unions, to be the only force capable of securing peace: "Solange nicht die Gewerkschaften ihre Mitglieder verpflichten, die Produktion von Kriegsmaterial zu verweigern, solange nicht die Gewerkschaften sich die Macht erkämpfen, diesen Beschluß zu verwirklichen, bleibt es bei papiernen Protesten."⁸ Shortly before Hitler became Chancellor, Toller stated to friends that he believed only the proletariat would be able to keep the Nazis in check.⁹

Of course it is possible that Toller made these statements without really believing in them, and there is certainly a shift of emphasis in the themes of his drama after Feuer aus den Kesseln. On the other hand, it is equally possible that he might have publicly returned to his

independent socialist stance had he lived to witness the defeat of Nazi Germany. Once Hitler came to power, Toller no longer saw socialism - publicly, in any case - as the means to defeat fascism. This apparently ideologically regressive development may well have been tactical; certainly we know that Toller was prepared, from a very young age, to compromise his revolutionary aims and to enter into "ein kleines Stück Zweckweg" (GW V, p. 49) with less progressive forces. Thus, we find him defending the Weimar Republic during his exile.

While Toller had been concerned to portray Weimar as a Republic without Republicans during the Twenties, as a state doomed because of its flagrant disregard for its own constitution and because of its continued domination by conservative forces, he defended the same Republic in the Thirties, simply because the situation had deteriorated so much. The only accusation Hitler had made against Weimar which finds Toller's approval concerns its weakness: if the Republic had been less tolerant of its enemies, it might have survived, he writes. (GW I, pp. 200-201). Initially, there appears to be a contradiction in Toller's assessments of Weimar. In 1932, he had severely criticised the high levels of poverty and unemployment, as well as the repression of artistic freedoms under a liberal constitution (GW I, pp. 73-74), yet five years later we find him praising the social and cultural achievements of the Weimar era:

Die Republik hat Werke aufgebaut, die in der Welt vorbildlich wirkten. Ihre Sozialpolitik, ihre Krankenversicherungen, ihre Invalidenversicherungen, ihre Hospitäler und Erholungsanstalten, ihr Tarif- und Arbeitsrecht, ihre Siedlungen und Sportpaläste, ihre kulturellen Leistungen, die Freiheit des Glaubens, der Wissenschaft und der Kunst, die in ihr herrschte,

haben die Bewunderung der Welt erregt. (GW I, p. 200).

This apparent contradiction can be explained by Toller's belief that the worker's lot deteriorated under Nazi rule (GW I, pp. 201-202), and by the harsh repression which accompanies dictatorship, which has made the political atmosphere in Germany so intolerable. Whatever Weimar's faults, Toller is saying here, it was by far preferable to its successor; while rights guaranteed in the Republic's idealistic constitution may have existed to a large extent only in theory, the potential for progress was far greater than in Hitler's Germany.

Toller no doubt felt that he was likely to marginalise his efforts against Nazism if he adhered to a radical socialist viewpoint. As it was, his activities were occasionally viewed with suspicion. We saw - in the previous chapter - how derisive The Scotsman was about Toller's demands that the PEN Club take a clear political line on Nazi Germany. That a revolutionary past could be a liability was demonstrated in Peter Meyer's "Bericht aus Schottland", a series of articles which appeared in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung on the 1934 PEN Congress:

Wer, wie der Schreiber, die Münchner Sowjetzeit 1919 miterlebt hat, konnte nur staunen, wie sich gerade Toller als Champion der freien Meinungsäußerung ausgeben konnte, die von keiner Regierung kompletter unterdrückt werden kann als sie damals von jener Räteregierung unterdrückt war, der Toller angehörte.¹⁰

Toller dismisses the idea of a struggle between National Socialism and communism in Germany: "Es geht heute einzig und allein um die Frage: Diktatur eines Mannes oder wahre Demokratie, Unfreiheit oder Freiheit, Recht oder Rechtlosigkeit, Barbarei oder Menschlichkeit."

(GW I, p. 206). Owing to his revolutionary socialist background, reactionaries found it easy to brand him a communist after he spoke out in 1933 against the public burning of books, (an accusation which he saw as a diversionary tactic):

Das ist immer die bekannte Methode, wenn man die Wahrheit nicht hören will. Ich gehöre weder der kommunistischen Partei an, noch handelt es sich um die Frage des Sozialismus oder Kommunismus. Es handelt sich um gar nichts anderes, als um die kulturelle Forderung geistiger Freiheit, um den Kampf für die Rechte des Menschen. (GW I, p. 280)

A less radical approach to the problem of Nazism was not uncommon among exiled writers. With the exception of Brecht,¹¹ many other emigrants turned their attention to the primary task in hand: the fight against fascism. This is true of both dogmatic Marxist writers, such as Johannes R. Becher - who in the 1920's had launched a bitter attack on Toller,¹² but who during the exile years maintained contact with him - and of nonaligned authors with socialist sympathies, such as Heinrich Mann. In 1936 Mann wrote to Lion Feuchtwanger: "Persönlich billige ich die kommunistische Demokratie, wie die Sowjet-Union sie hervorbringt. Für Deutschland brauchen wir den einfachen Freiheitskampf - ohne Doktrin: die kommt später, und wird natürlich sozialistisch sein."¹³ It must, of course, remain speculation whether Toller would have returned to a fight for socialism after the war. His suicide, the result of many disappointments - the success of Nazism, the failure of the Spanish Relief Project and of his marriage - and of feeling acutely depressed for several years, would indicate that he had lost faith in much of what he stood for, even though Ludwig Renn describes him as "im wesentlichen Kommunist", when recounting a meeting with Toller in 1938.¹⁴

We have seen that Toller had always opposed factionalism within the working-class, a problem which dominates his plays Masse Mensch, Die Maschinenstürmer, Hinkemann and Hoppla, wir leben!. In the 1930's he applied this idea to a United Front against Hitler. In 1936 he published the following "Mahnung" in Die Neue Weltbühne: "Die Herren im Reich dürfen zufrieden sein. Drei Jahre - und welche Jahre! - sind ins Land gegangen, und noch immer fehlt die einheitliche Front der Gegner, noch immer wird die Tat zerschrieben und zerredet." (FT, p. 211). Toller optimistically hoped that the extremism of fascism - which was capable of uniting elements that had formerly been hopelessly divided - would act as a catalyst for real democracy: "Vielleicht werden einmal die Historiker sagen, daß der Faschismus, der eine schwache und verfälschte Demokratie überwältigte, der Geburtshelfer der wahren Demokratie wurde, vergleichbar jenem Geist, der 'stets das Böse will und doch das Gute schafft.'" (GW I, p. 197). Toller even feels he actually has tangible evidence that fascism may contain the seeds of its own downfall, for the common enemy - extreme right-wing dictatorship - has united opponents of many different persuasions. This united opposition, Toller asserted in 1938, is made up not only of the left, but even includes moderates, Christians and high-ranking officers.¹⁵ (GW I, p. 216). Toller portrays this broad opposition in Pastor Hall through the characters Hall and von Grotjahn; he welcomes all signs of crossparty unity. In Spain he notes the levelling effect of the fascist threat, as the Republican side is made up of many disparate groups, who have given up the single-minded pursuit of their own goals: "Alle arbeiten in weiser Selbstbeschränkung, in Wort und Tat, für ein Ziel: für die Freiheit und Unabhängigkeit Spaniens, für den Schutz und die Rettung des Fundaments,

das allein ein menschenwürdiges Leben und Wirken ermöglicht." (GW I, p. 212). In 1934, when speaking at the first Congress of Soviet Writers, he welcomes a resolution calling upon the Soviet Union to offer asylum to persecuted writers; his defence of the 'ideologically impure' writer could apply to Kaiser:

Ich begrüße eure Resolution, es ist wichtig, Künstlern, die furchtlos gegen den Faschismus kämpfen, die Türen weit zu öffnen, selbst dann, wenn ihre Werke nicht alle ideologischen Forderungen erfüllen, die ihr stellt. Denn die Werke dieser Männer erfassen jene bürgerlichen und Intellektuellen-Schichten, jene Teile der Jugend, zu denen proletarische Kunst nur selten dringt. Sie zeichnen die Leere, die Verzweiflung, die Müdigkeit der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft, sie führen die Einsichtsbereiten zur Besinnung. Auch sie sind Pioniere zu einer neuen Welt.¹⁶ (GW I, p. 181).

As mentioned above, critics have noticed a decline in Toller's faith in the proletarian masses after Feuer aus den Kesseln, a trend which seems to foreshadow his ideological shift in the exile years. The masses have certainly lost their revolutionary potential in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!', and Die blinde Göttin is a pessimistic portrayal of a world in which people are not controlled by social and economic factors. Wunder in Amerika is generally seen to be part of this trend,¹⁷ although it is clear in this work that Toller and Kesten see social conditioning and capitalism as responsible for the rise of Mary Baker Eddy. As early as 1923, when he wrote Der entfesselte Wotan, Toller had shown considerable insight into the conditions necessary for the growth of fascism:¹⁸ Wotan, whose beginnings are as humble as those of Hitler, quickly draws the support of capitalists, the military and the aristocracy. Wunder in Amerika is a less direct assault on political dictatorship than Wotan, but

the hypnotic effect Mary Baker Eddy has on her disciples - and even on former enemies like John Oxford - is clearly meant to parallel the charisma of Hitler. Like Wotan, Baker Eddy is supported by the establishment; as a Worker recognises, Christian Science is seen by the ruling class as a means to distract the oppressed from the true source of their misery: "Das [große Haus] zahlen ihr die Fabrikanten, damit sie den armen Leuten den Himmel auf Erden verspricht, und die erst garnicht merken, daß die reichen Leute den Himmel auf Erden schon haben."¹⁹ Such insights are rare however; Mary's disciples see the solutions to their material misery as spiritual:

Aber wir haben schon alles Gute in Amerika, und trotzdem hungern die Armen und darben die Witwen und Waisen. In Ohio haben die Pflanze die Hälfte ihrer Felder nicht angebaut, um den Preis des Weizens hochzutreiben und im Staate Louisiana sind 187 getaufte Negerknäblein verhungert. Also müssen wir allen Armen sagen, wendet euch Gott zu, und ihr werdet satt werden von seinem Überfluß. (Wunder, pp. 28-29).

Another disciple believes that the failure of the Paris Commune is proof that all material revolutions are doomed:

In Paris haben die armen Leute die reichen Leute vertrieben und die Kommune verkündet. Sie haben gerufen, alle sind gleich und was dein ist, soll mein sein. Aber keiner hat an Gott geglaubt, und so sind sie ausgetilgt worden mit Mord und Feuer. (Wunder, p. 30).

Wunder in Amerika, while not dealing directly with the revolutionary proletariat, certainly echoes Toller's earlier plays in its depiction of an exploited class which cannot progress because social conditioning ensures that its enlightened members remain in a minority. It is also not a play which deals directly with the

rise of fascism, though it depicts the rise of an hypocritical, dictatorial fanatic who attracts support from misguided idealists and disillusioned people who hate humanity,²⁰ and who demands absolute obedience within her organisation: "Niemals darf ein Mitglied den Gehorsam gegen die Führerin brechen." (Wunder, p. 56). The play also shows the capitalist system's support of such a dictatorial figure.

In the first of his two plays written in exile, Nie wieder Friede!, Toller is once again concerned with the link between fascism and capitalism. Emil's dictatorship is a direct product of bourgeois capitalism, represented by Laban. Laban's early appraisals of peace have nothing to do with ideals: because his business is doing well, it suits him to condemn war. He sees everything in terms of profit, for when war is declared he realises that his business will continue to flourish. (GW III, p. 206). He tells his daughter Rachel: "Der Stimme des Herzens zu folgen, ist schon im Frieden ein schlechtes Geschäft. Im Krieg ist es Bankrott." (GW III, p. 207). As Napoleon points out to St. Francis in the first scenes, the fear of war has turned Dunkelstein into a haven for capital: "Sie werden mir zugeben, daß diese Stadt der Furcht vor dem Kriege alles verdankt." (GW III, p. 191). However, as war is equally profitable, the Dunkelstein establishment welcomes it; the representative of the masses who are exploited both in times of war and peace, Noah, points out who the losers are: "Für die einen regnet es Mannah im Frieden, für die einen im Krieg. Die einen und die einen sind meistens die einen." (GW III, p. 222). The bourgeois capitalists who instal Emil's dictatorship remain firmly in control, however.²¹ When Emil is no longer useful, Laban easily brings him down, having profited handsomely from the chaos caused by the wager of Napoleon and St. Francis.

We can see from Wunder in Amerika and Nie wieder Friede! that, despite charges of ideological regression, Toller maintains his highly critical view of capitalism, believing it to be responsible for the rise of Nazism. Nie wieder Friede! in particular shows Toller's concern - not evident to the same extent in Kaiser's dramatic work²² - for exposing the origins of fascism. However, the industrial proletariat plays a virtually insignificant role in Wunder in Amerika and does not feature at all in Nie wieder Friede! In the first of these two plays a worker is one of the few to see through the hypocrisy of the Christian Science movement, but he is powerless; in the second, though peace comes to Dunkelstein once more, this development is entirely coincidental, and is brought about by Laban - the likes of whom remain firmly in control - rather than by a revolutionary force.

Nevertheless, the ending of Nie wieder Friede! does, somewhat paradoxically, demonstrate Toller's continued advocacy of revolutionary change. This conclusion is particularly surprising when we consider that Napoleon, whose view of humanity is cynical, constantly proves St. Francis, who maintains a naive hope in man throughout virtually the entire play, wrong. But St. Francis learns from his bet with Napoleon; asked when real, lasting peace will come to mankind, he answers: "Wenn die Klugen schweigen. Wenn die Toren handeln." (GW III, p. 243; my emphasis). Francis rejects pacifism here for the first time in favour of action against "die Klugen". Earlier St. Francis had pointed out that many martyrs had died for peace, but Napoleon believes their failure had been to die passively, rather than as men of action. (GW III, p. 190). By the end of the play, St. Francis sees hope only in

an alternative form of action to the militaristic adventurism Napoleon believes to be an intrinsic part of man's nature. The 'clever', who St. Francis concludes must be overthrown, are powerful cynics like Napoleon himself, for it is he who first coins the contrast between 'the clever' and 'the fools': "Seit Jahrtausenden wissen die Klugen, daß der Friede ein Traum der Toren ist." (GW III, p. 242). Critics have concentrated on the ideological regression evident in Nie wieder Friede! (Rachel in particular is an embodiment of the idealistic, powerless pacifist). Bütow, for example, overlooks the final line, believing the play shows Toller's return to a more idealistic outlook.²³ The English version, No More Peace!, published and staged while Toller was still alive, has a more elaborate ending:

St. Francis. When the clever stop talking and the wise begin to act.

Napoleon. That is a dangerous doctrine.

St. Francis. Why dangerous?

Napoleon. It reminds me of a sentence written by a rebel, 'Hitherto philosophers have sought to explain the world. Our task is to change it.' For this doctrine he now lies in hell.

St. Francis. But surely he was right.

(Thunder)

Napoleon. You hear?

St. Francis. (whispering). Still - he was right.²⁴

St. Francis comes to adopt the basic outlook of Marx, even though the latter languishes in Hell.²⁵ Willibrand misses this point even though he draws conclusions

from an earlier assertion of Francis': "And the Saint who has read Das Kapital, does not believe that Karl Marx is 'quite the man' for him. It's the Saint's way of saying that Karl Marx was never quite the man for Toller."²⁶ Willibrand is referring here to a conversation which takes place between Napoleon and St. Francis early in the play, and is included in the German version. Napoleon suggests that Marx be brought up from Hell to discuss social problems, but St. Francis declines the offer: "Karl Marx? Ich habe ein Buch von ihm gelesen. Wie hieß es doch? Das Kapital. Es hat mir eigentlich nicht gefallen." (GW III, p. 190). By the end of the play however, the Saint hopes that the 'fools' will rise against their rulers, and thereby concedes that real peace can only arise out of fundamental social change.

Yet the work as a whole remains pessimistic; while Toller's sympathy for the masses is clearly discernible, they appear to be so thoroughly downtrodden and emasculated as to make revolutionary change seem virtually impossible. St. Francis' final words may be optimistic and defiant, but they have certainly not been encouraged by events in Dunkelstein. Noah represents St. Francis' 'fools',²⁷ but though he sees through the hypocrisy which makes war and peace instantly interchangeable, he is powerless to change anything and resigned to this fact. Mass solidarity is prevented by collaborators and opportunists, men like the artist Tomas in Nie wieder Friede! or Egon Freundlich in Pastor Hall.

In Pastor Hall, not only is the working-class as a force against fascism largely disregarded, but Toller does not go into the origins of fascist dictatorship in great depth. Nevertheless, the claim that Toller ignores these causes is not entirely correct.²⁸ Nazism

is presented as having grown out of economic depression; when Friedrich Hall asks Heinrich Degen why he became a Nazi, Degen answers:

Wie ich aus der Schule entlassen wurde,
ging ich auf Arbeitssuche, vier Jahre ging
ich auf Arbeitssuche, wohin ich kam, hieß
es, wir stellen Arbeiter aus, nicht ein.
Der Mensch braucht was, woran er sich halten
kann, eine Hoffnung. Die Jahre vergingen,
das einzige, was ich lernte, war stempeln...
Dann hörte ich Hitler sprechen. (GW III,
p. 294).

In other words, the fellow-traveller has supported Hitler's state out of despair motivated by economic circumstances. Toller was, however, concerned to expose the danger of Nazism and show the importance and heroism of dissent first and foremost;²⁹ that the working-class does not feature prominently in this play need not mean that Toller has lost all faith in the workers. One of the most positive figures, who also has an inspirational effect on Hall, is the revolutionary worker Peter Hofer. Hans Marnette, who detects an "ideologische Rückentwicklung"³⁰ in Pastor Hall, concedes that Hofer is the play's most positively portrayed character, but believes this figure's isolation to be symbolic of Toller's own aloofness from the working-class during these years.³¹ It is true that Hofer is isolated, but largely because his former comrades have become Nazis and betrayed him. He may be surrounded by factionalism and treachery, but he nevertheless remains a more politically-motivated figure than Noah in Nie wieder Friede!, and thus a more hopeful one. Hofer is in fact a sober and realistic socialist who has come to realise, as Toller had often warned during the Twenties, that the worker is far from infallible:

Wir haben geglaubt, wenn einer Arbeiter
ist, dann ist er weiß was, der liebe Gott

selber, entschuldigen Sie schon. Arbeiter sind auch nur Menschen, und wenn einer die Lohntüte am Sonnabend zu Mutter heimbringt, ist er darum noch nicht klüger. Manchmal sogar dümmer, weil er nichts gelernt hat und auf jeden Schwindel hereinfällt und nicht drei Meter weit sieht. (GW III, p. 289).

Hofer can still imagine participating in a socialist system, but he has shed the petty dogmatic phraseology which Toller always hated, for he greets August Karsch's misplaced remark about Hall - "Ein aufgeklärter Proletarier läßt sich nicht dumm machen von der Kirche," (GW III, p. 298) - with derision.

The fact that Toller shows a transformation in two bourgeois figures, Hall and Paul von Grotjahn, shows his belief that Nazism is capable of uniting many disparate liberal groups, including Christians and even army officers. Pastor Hall is an expression of reality.³² In the concentration camp, Hofer recounts the true fate of Erich Mühsam; Hall is strengthened by this account and makes a similar stand himself. These actions may be individual, but Toller believes there are many examples of such individual defiance; together they form what he refers to as "das andere Deutschland":

Oft fragen mich Ausländer, die am deutschen Volke verzweifeln: 'Wo, wo ist denn das andere Deutschland, an das Sie glauben?' Und ich erzähle ihnen von Edgar André, von Erich Mühsam, von den hunderten von Männern, jungen und alten, die mit der gleichen Würde starben. Ich erzähle ihnen von den 200,000 Gefangenen in den deutschen Konzentrationslagern, von jenen Tausenden, die Verbannung, Exil und Fremde der Unfreiheit vorziehen. Hier, sage ich ihnen, ist das andere Deutschland! (GW I, p. 205).

Pastor Hall is an attempt to show the broad opposition which made up "das andere Deutschland".

We can certainly detect a shift of emphasis away from socialism toward anti-fascism in Toller's plays and writings of the exile years. However, this move was no doubt at least partly dictated by a menace which Toller believed to be underestimated generally; in addition, in St. Francis' final words in Nie wieder Friede! and the arguments of Hofer in Pastor Hall a continued, if weakened, hope in revolutionary change is perceptible, despite the division and factionalism among the masses. As already mentioned, Walter Huder detects a similar development in Kaiser's work.

After leaving Germany in 1938, Kaiser wrote plays concerned mostly with social matters, but the growth of socialist ideas in his work is most evident in the sketches and stories which were written during this period. Huder claims Kaiser deliberately left some of these socio-political ideas undeveloped, preferring to use his time to elaborate those dramatic plans which concerned themselves chiefly with the barbarity of war; he believes it would be too easy to see Kaiser's bourgeois heritage as responsible for this tendency. (See note no. 2). Curiously, the article in which Huder makes this assertion does not indicate that six of the ten sketches he discusses were actually elaborated into short story form by Kaiser. In other words, it would appear that Kaiser felt the more political themes required a sober prose form. (Huder actually makes this point elsewhere.³³)

In any case, it would be too simple to say that the seven plays which incorporate social themes are mere anti-war plays. Of these plays - Napoleon in New Orleans, Klawitter, Der englische Sender, Der Soldat Tanaka, Das Floß der Medusa, Die Spieldose (1943)

and Zweimal Amphitryon -, only the latter two can be said to be mainly anti-war dramas. Two of these plays in particular - Tanaka and Napoleon in New Orleans - show an awareness of the economic causes of fascism, while nearly all of them depict a manipulative ruling authority, which results in a sympathetic portrayal of the masses, despite the disdain for them evident in Kaiser's letters of the time. In Klawitter, Hoff views the masses with similar disdain - "Befohlen wird, was noch dem Düm̄msten eingeht. Sonst könnte es ja nicht befohlen werden," (Werke VI, p. 331) - but as we have seen, this character fails owing to his own weakness. Tanaka, like the sketches and stories from these years, exposes the manipulative political order which perpetuates war. A system which preys on the poor it helps to create by recruiting the daughters of indebted peasants for profitable, state-run brothels is attacked by an ordinary soldier. Tanaka initially views the Emperor as a deity who actually spends his own money to benefit the poor by providing employment and status to ordinary men. The war-mongering of the ruling class - the consequence of which is mass poverty - appears to Tanaka to be an act of charity: "Wißt ihr denn, was das dem Kaiser kostet? [...] Es ist sein Eigentum - es bleibt sein Eigentum. Woher sonst stammt es?" (Werke III, p. 729). When Tanaka accuses an unjust system openly, this system becomes as unforgiving as the psychiatrist in Toller's Hoppla, wir leben!. On the surface, Napoleon in New Orleans appears to be chiefly an attack on militaristic fetishism; as such it is linked to Zweimal Amphitryon. Both Baron Dergan and Amphitryon glorify the violence, the false honour and pomp of war, and both are taught a lesson: the first by a lowly, amoral gang of swindlers, the second by the god Zeus himself. However, in Napoleon in New Orleans Kaiser depicts relationships between

money and military power, between the rich and the criminal, and, as in Tanaka, comes close in this play to Toller's analysis of the link between capitalism and fascism. Youyou and his gang are themselves greedy, amoral crooks - which they fully recognise. Youyou himself confesses that he is a rascal, and as such sees himself as the perfect collaborator with power: "Die Macht braucht Mörder, Schurken, Gauner. [...] Ich bin ein Gauner." (Werke III, p. 594).

Dergan, the rich aristocrat who is willing to invest enormous amounts in the restoration of the old imperial order, represents the financial power behind a fascist takeover. Unlike Laban, he does not instal a puppet, but a swindler who is out for personal gain rather than political power. Youyou remains aloof from the political aspirations of Dergan; like Byron in Toller's Die Maschinenstürmer (GW II, p. 120), he notes that funds which are not spent to profit society are blatantly wasted on arms:

Es ist doch komisch, wie leicht das Geld fließt, wenn es sich um die Beschaffung von Waffen handelt. Da gibt es plötzlich keine Knappheit der öffentlichen Mittel mehr - das Geld scheint buchstäblich vom Himmel zu fallen. Es überschwemmt das Land und sättigt jedes Bedürfnis nach Kanonen und Gewehren. Wenn dir aber einfallen sollte dasselbe Geld oder nur den nötigen Bruchteil davon für die öffentliche Verteilung von Brot zu fordern, so würde dasselbe Geld sofort von der Bildfläche verschwinden.³⁴ (Werke III, p. 602).

Klawitter and Der englische Sender are bitter, not very well thought out attacks on Nazism. We have seen that Klawitter is a flawed play, which is most valid as an autobiographical piece of self-criticism. Der englische Sender is only an anti-war play because it is an anti-Nazi play written during the War. The

War is important to the plot, but it is portrayed as no more and no less than one of Nazism's barbaric creations, albeit the greatest of these barbarities. Schmutz himself sums up the role of the War in Der englische Sender, when he describes it as: "Ein Unternehmen unsers Führers, das ihm besonders am Herzen liegt - ja, seine ureigenste Schöpfung ist!"³⁵ (Werke VI, p. 404). The play thus concentrates fully on the authority which causes war, but unlike Tanaka, Der englische Sender makes no attempt to explain the origins of fascism. It is a play characterised by Kaiser's hatred of, rather than opposition to, the Nazis.³⁶ Pastor Hall shows Toller's greater emotional distance from Nazism, a distance Kaiser could only achieve by setting his more successful attacks on fascism (Tanaka, Napoleon in New Orleans) outside of Nazi Germany. Obviously, Toller does not in any way sympathise politically with his Nazi characters, but Degen's decision to turn against the system shows that Toller believed ordinary people had been seduced by an ideology which in their heart of hearts they could not support. Even the careerist Fritz Gerte is portrayed as a human being, albeit a cowardly, brutalised and misguided one. The unsubtly-named Schmutz, on the other hand, has no redeeming qualities at all. Ernst Schürer believes that Schmutz is too grotesque a character to be taken seriously, and that even the play's villagers manage to see him off easily.³⁷ In fact, Schmutz defeats the villagers, and is only foiled by the timely arrival of the wife he had deserted sometime earlier. While Schürer is correct in saying that Schmutz is so transparently corrupt and unsympathetic a character that a spectator who happened to be ignorant about the history of the Nazi era would find it impossible to understand how a single German could ever have voted for the NSDAP, it is certainly not true to say

that the villagers deal with him. The real weakness of the play lies in the fact that "der braune Auswurf" (Werke VI, p. 425) appears to be in such a minority; it is virtually impossible to understand how the Nazis ever secured a power base. Clearly Kaiser wanted to show how the Nazis' prejudices tended to favour the opportunistic and the morally bankrupt, as Schmutz is merely a more vulgar version of Klawitter. In so doing, however, Kaiser pits the Nazi opportunist against the masses, thus portraying the latter in a favourable light. At the end of Der englische Sender, Schmutz is driven away, but the authority which put him in a position of power is still firmly in place: the portrayal of the Nazis as a malicious elite who work against the interests of the people is thus not unlike Toller's picture of Nazi Germany.

While Der englische Sender presents Nazism as a barbaric phenomenon, it makes no attempt to explain its origins. Schmutz himself describes its appeal, by comparing Hitler's success with that of Christianity's message:

Haben Sie von Ihrem Zehngebote-gott so großen Eindruck? Hat er die Macht euch zur Befolgung seiner Gebote anzuhalten? Heißt nicht das eine: du sollst nicht töten? Das ist euch doch geboten: das Leben eures Nächsten zu achten als wär's das eigne. Und achtet ihr? Flößt er - der Mächtige - euch Achtung ein? -- Da seht euch unsern Führer an. Der hat die Macht und übt sie aus. Wenn er befiehlt - und er befiehlt: tötet - so töten wir, das kann der Führer gewiß sein. Wir töten nach Strich und Faden jeden Nächsten. (Werke VI, p. 422).

In Der englische Sender, the Nazis are portrayed as an elite who rule by terror and do not have the true support of the masses, but who are sustained at a grass-roots level only by a scattering of corrupt and violent minions. Kaiser thus acknowledges

the use of repressive terror, but ignores, in this play, the use of conditioning and propaganda. Toller sees the Nazis using both: those who are not converted by lies and hypocrisy, are ruthlessly persecuted: "Wo Lüge und Heuchelei nicht ausreichen, setzt der Terror ein."³⁸ Schmutz sees violent, sadistic terror as the distinguishing trademark of the Nazi regime: "Wo keine Köpfe rollen, ist der Staat nicht Staat. Und unsere Machtergreifung wäre nur ein Dienstantritt, wie das in andern Ländern üblich, wo man wählt." (Werke VI, p. 413). The characters of Der englische Sender are politically ignorant and unorganised, but they are in essence opposed to the regime: Alma's simple humanitarian outlook, similar to that of Rachel in Nie wieder Friede!, is typical. However, in his effort to show widespread opposition to the regime, Kaiser creates a picture which lacks credibility. In Pastor Hall, Toller is also at pains to show this widespread opposition, but shows that Nazism's support is drawn from both the ranks of the politically ignorant, who have an in-built inclination to subordinate themselves to the powers-that-be (Traugott Pipermann), and of the economically repressed (Heinrich Degen).

While Der Soldat Tanaka and Napoleon in New Orleans are more distanced, and therefore more believable, attacks on Nazism, sympathy for the masses emerges from them for the same reason as it does from Der englische Sender: ordinary people are pitted against a system which maliciously maintains militaristic values. This is more obviously the case in Tanaka, where the masses are shown to be as selfless and pacifist as the New Man of Kaiser's Expressionist works, as Richard Helt has pointed out.³⁹ Helt also shows that Tanaka is not so much an individual figure - as he is not in conflict with the masses - but one who represents

them and their interests.⁴⁰ Like Noel Kehoe, and Olim and Severin, Tanaka is a revolutionary-from-below. The sympathetic portrayal of ordinary crooks in Napoleon in New Orleans shows a tolerant attitude toward human weakness. Youyou and his gang may have few scruples, but their moral sense about major social crime is impeccable. They are better than Dergan, and yet are products of the distorted values handed down from above. In Youyou a sense of justice and an earthy lack of scruple are combined: he is a similar figure to Brecht's unconventional good and bad judge Azdak in Der kaukasische Kreidekreis.

Kaiser's sympathetic attitude toward the masses begins to deteriorate in one of his most bitter works, Das Floß der Medusa, another play to which war forms an important backdrop. While war is the immediate cause of the children's plight - as they find themselves in a lifeboat after their ship, the Medusa, is torpedoed⁴¹ - their decision to kill Fückslein, the hapless thirteenth member of their party, is influenced by the absurd superstitions and obsessions of the adult world of which war is a further consequence. Thus war is merely an extension, a symptom, of the human depravity which seals the fate of Fückslein.⁴² Allan's attempts to reason with the others - he at one point throws the Fifth Commandment at them, as their superstitions are derived from Christian ideas - are fruitless because the irrational prejudices impressed upon them by their parents are too ingrained. In rejecting the Commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' in favour of the belief that it is fatal for thirteen people to eat together, the children show they have taken on a distorted version of Christian values. Ann, who combines these twisted values with adult astuteness, represents the amoral establishment intellectual, the apologist who is aware of this abuse of Christian teaching. She sees how

religious belief is exploited by the powers-that-be, i.e. how Church leaders collaborate with their secular counterparts in justifying war. Yet she elevates this contradiction to a virtue, instead of lamenting it, because she cannot imagine a world in which the adult status quo is wrong:

Dann hast du nie gesehn, wie unsre Prediger die Waffen weihen, mit denen immer mehr getötet wird als früher schon der Fall war. Es können sogar die Bomben, die uns vertreiben, und das Torpedo, das unser Schiff versenkte, geweiht sein - wenn nur die Prediger zum segnen zugelassen werden. Bereit sind sie. Das ist in allen Ländern so, wo Christen wohnen. Deshalb sind sie Christen, weil sie nur mit geweihten Waffen töten. (Werke III, p. 802).

The masses are thus portrayed as ruthlessly brutal, and not as innocent and intrinsically good as in Tanaka - despite the children's ironic references to their innocence and independence from the adult world early in the play (Werke III, p. 779 & pp. 783-784) -, but their brutality is due to all-pervasive social conditioning. Allan dies a nihilist because he concludes that the depravity of man - caused and encouraged from above - is irreversible.

War is not depicted as the deliberate product of a manipulative class in the plays Die Spieldose and Zweimal Amphitryon, the latter play being the first of Kaiser's 'Greek Trilogy'. As in the plays discussed above, war forms a backdrop rather than the central conflict in Die Spieldose, though it is the root cause of all the problems which beset the family of Paul Chaudraz. War intervenes in the idyllic relationships of Pierre, Paul and Noelle in the first place, it leads to Paul being declared dead and to his loss of memory, and finally, it is the German occupation

of Brittany which gives Paul his chance of redemption. While the instigators of war are accused in Das Floß der Medusa, in Napoleon in New Orleans and in Tanaka - and are actually depicted in the latter two plays - the root causes of war are largely ignored in Die Spieldose, in favour of its tragic effects. Even when Paul theorises on the causes of war in his final speech, he does not accuse anyone or anything, but simply laments man's collective guilt, and people's inability to accept and be content with the earth's riches:

Es ist der tiefere Betrug: die Schändung unsrer Erde. Treibt - blüht und reift sie nicht? Ist sie nicht gütig, indem sie unsren Schweiß annimmt? Wie danken wir für so viel Gunst? Wir schütten aus den Scheffeln, die sich füllen wollen, die Frucht ins Meer. Ins Salzmeer und ins Blutmeer. Wir schließen weite Scheuern, in die die Ernte einziehn will, mit Riegeln zu. Mit Riegeln und mit Schwertern. Das ist die Antwort auf der Erde Anerbieten - wir darben. (Werke III, pp. 869-870).

Das Floß der Medusa, on the other hand, combines this notion of man's general depravity with a more political view, in which Ann represents the establishment ideas which are hammered relentlessly into the minds of the population. The world of Die Spieldose seems altogether more harmless; despite the deaths of both Pierre and Paul, the end is far more optimistic because the world is nothing like as sinister as Allan comes to perceive it. Kaiser returns to the theme of postponed improvement: like the Billionaire's Son, Paul places hope in a future generation. As he bids farewell to Noelle, he tells her: "Lass' dein Kind nicht wissen, wie wir Unwürdigen waren. Lehr es: der Erde würdig werden." (Werke III, p. 870).

Hope for change is also the final note of Kaiser's last anti-war effort, Zweimal Amphitryon, in which Amphitryon is punished by Zeus for his lust for war. Alcmene, Amphitryon's neglected wife, is left carrying Zeus' son, who is to become a New Man, combining tremendous physical strength with moral purity. War is portrayed as the product of perverted masculine virility: Amphitryon is seduced by the glittering suit of armour he is given as a wedding present, and forgets his bride. The destructive male power of Amphitryon is contrasted with the female strength of Alcmene, whose energies are directed solely towards life and love. It is Alcmene's capacity for love which persuades Zeus to give humanity another chance, as he had originally been planning to destroy mankind. Zeus attacks the fallacy of 'honourable battle':

Ihr habt den Tod geschändet durch den Mord,
den ihr mit schaler Heuchelei umlügt
in Krieg der Männer - männerwürd'ges Tun.
(Werke VI, p. 511).

Like Basileus, Amphitryon becomes addicted to warfare: not satisfied with the sacking of Pharsala, he demands that his army fight on. Unlike Die Lederköpfe, however, Zweimal Amphitryon does not feature the masses, and we have no idea of the ordinary soldier's feelings about Amphitryon's desire for conquest. The army is represented by Amphitryon's officers, who obey him, but do not share his further thirst for blood after the fall of Pharsala. All opposition to Amphitryon comes from above: from the Elders who occupy positions of authority in the ancient Greek society in which the play is set, and of course from Zeus himself. There is no revolutionary movement against Amphitryon. The error of his ways only becomes fully apparent after divine intervention. As the supreme authorities in Zweimal Amphitryon are forces interested in peace,

Kaiser is able to portray war as a psychological perversion and a sublimation of sexual and creative energy. Zweimal Amphitryon shows Kaiser's scepticism towards the masses re-emerging in 1943. Not only are the masses excluded from the play, but a god is required to solve the problems of mankind.

Kaiser wrote Die Spieldose and Zweimal Amphitryon in late 1943. This year appears to have been a turning point for him, as 1938 had been. While his work became more political during the first five years in Switzerland, he abandoned this development during the last two years of his life, in favour of a more isolated outlook. The stories and sketches which came into being from 1938 to 1943 reinforce the notion that socialist ideas were growing in Kaiser's work. It would seem that Kaiser regarded prose as the best medium for his more realistic political ideas.⁴³ Certainly Kaiser's first attempt at writing a novel - [Albin Achilles], of which only the first chapter was completed - would support this theory. As we saw in Chapter I, this fragment deals with the effects of industrial rationalisation and profiteering on the working-class, in a sober style not often found in Kaiser's plays. By the late Thirties and early Forties this style has developed even further: the short stories are written in compact, concise sentences, which record facts with little emotion. Six of the fourteen stories Kaiser wrote during this period directly concern themselves with war. In all of them war is deliberately created and perpetuated by a ruling minority. Two stories written in 1943 - Der Soldat, der keine Auszeichnungen annehmen will and Fliegerangriff oder der zweifache Maßstab - clearly deal with the Second World War in particular. The first has a strong autobiographical element,⁴⁴ and attacks the ideology of war as Ächtung des Kriegers

had, by denying that the warrior is honourable. Yet the ambiguity we discovered about the nature of authority in the dramatic dialogue is not in evidence in Der Soldat, der keine Auszeichnungen annehmen will; the Soldier refuses to be decorated for bravery "weil er überzeugt ist, daß man für etwas keine Belohnung annehmen darf, wozu man gezwungen wurde." (Werke IV, p. 533). Fliegerangriff oder der zweifache Maßstab is a very effective assault on the propaganda lies of the Nazis; it is particularly significant because it destroys the notion that the Nazi party was a party of the people. In this story, Kaiser describes the fate of a family living in the Third Reich. This family is ordinary and simple, though it has done well under the regime: its head is a faithful party member, his Wife has contributed more than her fair share to the Aryan race and has been suitably rewarded by the state, and the Daughter is pregnant, hoping to achieve the same. While Kaiser never approves - "Ihr Blut sei gesegnet, hatte der fette Parteiarzt mit seinen braunen Gummihandschuhen festgestellt," (Werke IV, p. 535) is how Nazi approval of the Daughter's impending motherhood is described - we nevertheless get the impression that a society has been built in which old class structures have been replaced by a common national purpose. However, as Heinrich Degen finds out in Pastor Hall, these changes are superficial and ultimately irrelevant; the Daughter and Wife are killed in an air-raid, the Father becomes "Träger des Volkszorns," (Werke IV, p. 535) prepared not only to avenge the deaths of his loved ones, but to kill in the name of a nation whose greatest 'assets' have been destroyed. Yet he finds, to his surprise, that he is prevented from killing the pilot who has parachuted to safety by German soldiers, who refer to the pilot as an 'honourable officer'. As he is arrested, the

father is forced to accept that the old class-based notions of honour and superiority are still very much in force, and that his cherished beliefs are no more than a tissue of lies.

The fragment Leutnant Welzeck (1938), actually the first chapter of an unfinished novel, depicts a fanatically militaristic airman, a "Handlanger des totalen Krieges".⁴⁵ While Welzeck is a modern Duguesclins who worships the false god of a bloody, 'honourable' death, and while the faceless army he describes has as little individual identity as that planned by Basileus,⁴⁶ the story also looks at the effects massive military expenditure has on the ordinary population. Whilst admiring the amassed military hardware during his flights over the countryside, Welzeck also happens to observe a peasant who is forced to use his wife and cow to help pull his plough. Although Welzeck accuses the farmer of behaving foolishly, as such abuse could only ruin the woman's chances of bearing children, and the cow's capacity for producing milk, he knows he has touched the essence of the poverty trap from which the masses cannot escape:

Bauer - wie töricht bist du: dein Weib
einzuspannen. Und die Kuh.
Antworte mir nicht: ein Pflug zieht sich
nicht selbst.
Wer soll ihn dir ziehen?
Um deine Kinder zu retten? Und die Milch
für deine Kinder?
Du stellst mir unmögliche Fragen. [...]
Eines Fliegers Ohr ist von dem Brausen seines
Flugzeugs erfüllt. Für alles andre sind
seine Ohren taub.⁴⁷ (Werke IV, pp. 518-519).

Several stories portray the worker not only as exploited, but as a being of greater morality than his rulers, the natural bearer of progressive ideas such as internationalism. This idea emerges vividly in Weizen ins Meer (1938), Ein Arbeitsloser (1943) and Ein Arbeiter

(1943). Weizen ins Meer, as its title suggests, is a comment on the cynical measures undertaken by rich countries to stabilise food prices in a world full of hunger. While the ship's Captain wants to sink the cargo of wheat, "weil für ihn der Befehl mehr bedeutet als der Hunger," (Werke IV, p. 483) the crew decide, as a gesture of solidarity, to mutiny in order to distribute the food among the starving inhabitants of an island lying on the ship's route. The Captain's absurd and pointless victory is a further comment on the establishment's cynicism.

The two most overtly political stories are Ein Arbeitsloser and Ein Arbeiter. Both stories depict simple workers who become politicised, both show workers in general as the natural advocates of moral values, and both show work as a hindrance to the worker's enlightenment, as it keeps them materially enslaved and their minds off political matters. Both protagonists work in munitions factories; the first finds work in such a factory after a period of unemployment (hence the title Ein Arbeitsloser), and becomes complacent owing to the increased material comfort his work brings him. The second Worker, employed in munitions works at the beginning of the story, is also politically ignorant: "Sein Geist schläft," (Werke IV, p. 537) is how his mental state is described. In both an awakening takes place, spurred on in the first by a newspaper article about war-torn Spain, in the second by a promotion brought on by a win in a lottery. There are certain traits in both stories typical of Kaiser: in Ein Arbeitsloser, the individual who perceives the problem also attempts to solve it on his own, and in Ein Arbeiter, the catalyst which sets the Worker thinking is the luck of a lottery win. Huder believes Kaiser comes closer to Marxism in Ein Arbeitsloser

than in any other work: "Mit dieser Skizze zeigt sich Georg Kaiser, die fundamentale Bedeutung der Produktionsmittel betonend, als konsequent denkender wie radikal praktizierender, allerdings - wenn es das gäbe - individualistischer Marxist."⁴⁸ Certainly the story's protagonist is a revolutionary-from-below, a figure which appears during the late 1920's in Kaiser's work, but his single action (blowing up the munitions factory) in which he loses his life, is closer to the impulsiveness of Karl Thomas, than to the slower but more purposeful organised mass revolution advocated by Albert Kroll and more common to Marxists. However, Kaiser seems to realise this, for while he clearly approves of the conclusion at which the Worker arrives, namely that he too is guilty, even as a humble worker producing munitions for the Spanish fascists, the story ends with the following lines:

Die Zeitungen meldeten am nächsten Tag die Sprengung der Munitionsfabrik durch das Verbrechen eines Wahnsinnigen, der bei seiner Tat ums Leben kam. Den spanischen Faschisten fehlten in der Folgezeit einige Tausend Patronen. (Werke IV, p. 486).

These two sentences tell us two things: first, that the press reports on the Worker's action are unfavourable and he is therefore unlikely to receive much public support; and second, that the Spanish fascists were deprived of a few thousand bullets. Considering that Franco was supplied with tremendous amounts of military hardware and eventually won the Spanish Civil War, the practical value of the Worker's act of destruction is somewhat doubtful. Thus the analysis of the problems in Ein Arbeitsloser is one of which Toller would have approved: the story is certainly not afraid to confront 'sordid' unaesthetic realities, and it sees clear links between profit and war. But while the solution presented is satisfactory for the individual Worker

portrayed, in that it solves the problem of his personal guilt and prevents another taking his place in the factory, the political problems remain unresolved; the individual solution is seen in a critical light here.

In Ein Arbeiter this problem of long-term solutions is resolved, very much in the way Kroll and Berg address the worker's plight in Hoppla, wir leben! While the worker-protagonist of this story gains the time to appreciate that the factory in which he has invested his winnings is contributing to a barbaric war, he does not become an opportunist or collaborator, but decides he must inform his former colleagues about how their work is being exploited. He asks them: "Muß ein Arbeiter nicht für den Frieden kämpfen, weil nur der Friede den Fortschritt bringt?" (Werke IV, p. 538). Although his pleas for a strike are initially ignored by the intimidated workforce, he finds out about the union - now forced underground - which is fighting for peace. The Worker becomes engaged in long-term organised agitation, and the end is far more optimistic than that of Ein Arbeitsloser:

Der Arbeiter wurde Mitglied der Organisation, die jetzt imstande war, die Fabrik in die Zange zu nehmen. Und es kam der Tag des Friedens. Es war ein Tag, an dem die Rechnung aufging. (Werke IV, p. 538).

The Worker's involvement with the union has an obvious parallel with Toller's wartime agitatory activities: he too incited munitions workers to strike for peace, rather than for improved pay and working conditions. Although the Worker wins money and invests it in the factory, thereby technically becoming a capitalist, he is never fully removed from his roots. Although he is a revolutionary-from-above in the sense that

he must first liberate himself from the drudgery of his existence, he remains a worker at heart, who perceives that the proletarian's productivity should be conducive to peace, not war. That the worker's skills can be exploited easily in time of war is also emphasised in Ein Arbeitsloser, when the story's protagonist is first employed in the munitions factory he eventually blows up. "Er wird Dreher in einer Munitionsfabrik. Früher drehte er Werkteile für Landwirtschaftsmaschinen." (Werke IV, p. 485). Kaiser discovers the vicious circle here that Toller believed could only be overcome by long-term political education: the soul-destroying nature of industrial work keeps workers in an ignorant and oppressed state, even though they are the only ones who can break through the links between profit and war.

In his article, "Der 'Zwang zur Politik': Georg Kaiser und Stephan Hermlin im Exil", Manfred Durzak accuses Kaiser of not rising to the political challenge offered to writers by Nazism. However, while Durzak attempts to make his point by reminding us that Kaiser's plans to write a novella entitled Stauffenberg, which was to examine the underlying reasons behind the failure of the attempt on Hitler's life on 20 July 1944, were never actually carried out, he ignores the stories which Kaiser did write. In fact, Durzak does not only fail to mention Ein Arbeitsloser and Ein Arbeiter, he also ignores the dramas Der Soldat Tanaka and Napoleon in New Orleans, both of which, as we have seen, examine the economic foundations and the waste of war. As Durzak only discusses the NSDAP plays in relation to Kaiser's response to Nazism, it is hardly surprising that he is able to conclude: "Das Exil wirkt also nicht in dem Sinne als Katalysator auf Kaiser, daß es ihm die Augen öffnet für die Notwendigkeit einer

politischen Standortsbestimmung."⁴⁹ In fact, as we have seen, Kaiser's exile plays up to 1943 took not only an anti-war stance, saw not only the militaristic barbarities of fascism, but openly accused the establishment he believed to be responsible for the rise of Nazism. In his stories Kaiser often portrayed the working-class as the natural heirs to a society based on peace and progress, rather than war and waste. In the story Ein Arbeiter Kaiser finally adopts the precise position Toller had occupied in the late Twenties, from which the latter had however publicly distanced himself during his years in exile. This is not to say that Kaiser adopted and became entrenched in a fixed ideological position - we have seen that Kaiser often made inconsistent and contradictory statements throughout his life - but we can certainly conclude that he did rise to the political challenge of Nazism. There are inconsistencies within the collection of short stories as well: in Das Märchen des Königs (1943), for example, the King is portrayed as an isolated, innocent figure, unaware of the power he wields and how it is abused by his corrupt courtiers, whereas the demagogic Charlatan of Nach einem verlorenen Krieg - clearly representative of Hitler - is the evil incarnation of power itself, which is shown to be by nature corruptive. Such inconsistencies, however, prove to be exceptions rather than the rule, when seen against the background of the body of work Kaiser wrote between 1938 and 1943. The misanthropic tone of his last two plays can be found in few of the works from these years, though his letters bubble with the bitterness which eventually caused him to turn away from man in disgust. One such work is Jesus (1940/41), which, despite being only a fragment of two lines, is very un-Christian in its disdain for mankind: "Wenn das Genie den Nächsten zum Bruder macht, / hat es sich selbst auf dem Kreuz umgebracht." (Werke

VI, p. 731). It is significant that Jesus remained a tiny fragment, as Kaiser appears to have forced himself to display a favourable attitude toward the masses during the first five years in Switzerland. Kaiser took up this theme again in early 1943, in a short prose piece entitled Der Kurgast Jesus, in which Christ, Mary and God flee to Paradise in order to live "ein Dasein der glückvollen Menschenferne."⁵⁰ (Werke IV, p. 528).

Critical interpretations which portray Kaiser as an arrogant, self-obsessed and generally insincere character,⁵¹ fail to take all of his exile work into account, and fail to stress 1943 as a watershed year, in which the elements of flight and disillusionment in his work finally assert themselves. We have seen how Die Spieldose and Zweimal Amphitryon take a less political view of war than the earlier plays written after 1938; during the final two years of his life, even the theme of war disappears almost completely from Kaiser's work, and the production of prose is suddenly stopped and replaced with verse. The work of Kaiser's last two years is not so much ideologically regressive as completely apolitical; it represents a turn away from external reality towards the self. It is significant that Kaiser's previously mentioned plans to write a novella based on the assassination plot against Hitler never actually came to fruition. It is as if the plot led by Count von Stauffenberg came too late for Kaiser. While the capitalist is still represented in Pygmalion by Konon, he is just one of the many figures in society who conspire to hinder the artist in his work. Konon is merely at the head of an amoral society; he describes his sycophantic employees as "erster Klasse - pfiffig - frech - morallos." (Werke VI, p. 537). The powers-that-be and the masses collaborate

to shut the artist out: "So seid ihr Künstler Fremdlinge im Volk, / das lieber steinigt als den Genius sieht." (p. 522). Kaiser's long apparent distrust for the masses finally dominates his thinking. His many poems of these last two years reflect a feeling of persecution, as does Pygmalion; in Bellerophon the artist, already established as a superior but unrewarded being in Pygmalion, is rescued from humankind by the gods. Kaiser described Bellerophon as his "swansong" (Briefe, p. 983), but such final statements are not unusual among his letters. Of his previous play Kaiser had written, for example: "Im Pygmalion habe ich alles gesagt, was ich noch zu sagen hatte." (Briefe, p. 971). There are signs that he felt increasingly optimistic during the final months of his life, when the liberation of Germany became no more than a matter of time: with the help of Julius Marx and Brecht he planned to set up a publishing house named 'Lenz', in order to make known his own work, and that of other exiled writers, in post-war Germany. It is quite possible that Kaiser's writing - parallel to his growing optimism - may have reverted to less introspective themes, had he not died suddenly on 4 June 1945.

The Problems of Violence and Pacifism.

Both Toller and Kaiser contradict themselves to a certain extent regarding pacifism during their years in exile. Toller rejects pacifism and analyses its failure in articles, even though both Rachel and Hall choose a completely non-violent path to express their dissent, as had the Woman in Masse Mensch. Kaiser both endorses and rejects pacifism in his plays of these years: Tanaka's exemplary stand is a non-violent protest, while Dergan predicts a world governed by

reason and moral behaviour, but not necessarily devoid of violence.

The pacifist's dilemma in the face of aggression is self-evident; Toller describes it thus: "What happens when people, who are absolute pacifists and not only abhor violence but even force, come in contact with this destructive will and permit it full reign?" Toller concludes that the rejection of the pacifist stance can be the only result, for he continues: "I was a convinced pacifist, but reality set me right." (GW I, p. 82). Rachel's position in Nie wieder Friede! would seem to contradict this unambiguous statement: she is above the pettiness of Dunkelstein's suddenly rekindled lust for war, sees through the double-standards which allow peace and war to become instantly interchangeable, and relies on the basic truth she perceives in the Fifth Commandment. (GW III, p. 211). Her agitation against the newly-declared war, based on the simple Christian principle of 'Thou shalt not kill', results in her arrest: twice personal advantages give her a chance to escape, but she refuses on principle. The effect of Rachel's pacifist position is to help her fiancé overcome his fear of losing his life, but Toller makes it clear that such a position can only combat a repressive system in the long-term, for it does nothing to contribute to the fall of Emil, who is removed from power by Laban. Friedrich Hall's decision to face certain death by daring to accuse the regime openly, or the individual courage of the young anti-Nazi worker portrayed in "Das Verhör",⁵² can also only be seen as the beginning of a gradual process of enlightenment.

How then, can Toller reject and yet simultaneously endorse the principle of non-violence? The answer

lies in the same writings in which pacifism is seen as an unrealistic approach to aggression, for Toller attacks the traditional idea that pacifism means absolute non-violence. "Das Versagen des Pazifismus in Deutschland" (1934-35) begins with Toller's various ideas of the meaning of pacifism: it can be either "ein religiöses Lebensgefühl für die Unverletzbarkeit des Lebendigen", or "ein politisches Friedensideal mit dem Ziel der Moralisierung der Politik", or even "eine revolutionäre Forderung". (GW I, pp. 182-183). In other words, a pacifist can be a quasi-religious dreamer, or a politically aware realist; while all pacifists see peace and internationalism as desirable and achievable goals, there can be differences between them on how these goals are to be reached. The revolutionary pacifist, in Toller's eyes, combines good intentions with a sense of reality about the forces which prevent the creation of a peaceful international community. This awareness of chauvinistic forces committed to the prevention of progress, leads to the pacifist realising that he cannot apply individual morals to a political situation involving the masses: "The moral plane of the single individual is one thing, the political plane of the masses and peoples another." (GW I, p. 82). These views echo those expressed before 1933, and show that Toller, while retracting his overt public support for revolutionary socialism, remained consistent throughout the exile years on the questions of violence and pacifism. In 1928 he wrote: "Aller wahre Pazifismus ist revolutionär. Pazifismus, der glaubt, auf dem Fundament der kapitalistischen Gesellschaftsordnung die Welt befrieden zu können, ist blind."⁵³ Let us also remind ourselves of Toller's own analysis (written in 1930) of the central problem in Masse Mensch:

Nur wenige erkannten, daß der Kampf zwischen Individuum und Masse sich nicht nur draußen abspielt, daß jeder in seinem Innern Individuum

und Masse zugleich ist. Als Individuum handelt er nach der als recht erkannten moralischen Idee. Ihr will er leben, und wenn die Welt dabei untergeht. Als Masse wird er getrieben von sozialen Impulsen und Situationen, das Ziel will er erreichen, auch wenn er die moralische Idee aufgeben muß. Dieser Widerspruch ist heute noch für den politisch Handelnden unlöslich, und gerade seine Unlöslichkeit wollte ich zeigen. (GW I, p. 139).

Thus the individual acts of Rachel and Hall are quite valid: their willingness to die for their convictions - in order to advertise those very ideals - remains the individual's most fruitful act possible in the face of repression. But such passivity is not enough to prevent the growth of reactionary ideals and regimes; Toller claims in "Das Versagen des Pazifismus in Deutschland" that old values were not actively torn down in the Weimar era, were not replaced by new ideals: "Überall in Schulen, in Büchern, in Filmen, in den Reden der republikanischen Staatsmänner wurden den falschen Helden Denkmale gesetzt und zu Symbolen für die deutsche Jugend erhoben." (GW I, p. 188). This dual approach to pacifism is reflected in both Nie wieder Friede! and Pastor Hall. Rachel, as we have seen, would rather die than renounce her belief in peace, whereas her counterpart in Heaven, St. Francis, comes to recognise that 'peace' is a relative concept, one which can be abused by the powers-that-be: "Vielleicht sollten wir darüber nachdenken, was Friede ist, und was Friede sein könnte. Vielleicht ist der Friede, von dem die Staatsmänner soviel sprechen garnicht der rechte Friede." (GW III, p. 241). St. Francis comes to view mass action, not passivity, as the basis for real change. Napoleon wonders when an era of peace and truth can begin, and St. Francis answers: "Wenn die Klugen schweigen. Wenn die Toren handeln." (GW III, p. 243). Friedrich Hall chooses a non-violent stand, but this form of

resistance cannot be seen to be totally representative of Toller's views. Hall's wartime experiences have convinced him that peaceful means can solve all problems: "Es gibt keine Frage auf Erden, die nicht gewaltlos gelöst werden könnte, und sei sie noch so verschlungen und verworren." Peter Hofer knows that such a viewpoint is easily abused: "Zur gewaltlosen Lösung gehören immer zwei, Herr Pastor." (GW III, p. 290). Toller reaffirms his belief in the necessity of revolutionary violence through Hofer, whose attitude corresponds to Toller's as stated in Quer Durch (see Chapter II, quotation no. 24). When Hall asks Hofer whether he would use violence if he were in power, he replies: "Töten, wenns sein muß, ja... Schinden, ne,"⁵⁴ (GW III, p. 289) and points out: "Wir beten die Gewalt nicht an, das tun die andern." (p. 290).

In the face of Nazi aggression, Toller realised that only force could counter force. He opposed the policy of appeasement, believed the approaching war, unlike the First World War, to be a battle between brutal tyranny and freedom, rather than a contest for power and markets (GW I, p. 217), and advocated the use of defensive force:

That state which fires the first shot is not the breaker of the peace. The peace breaker is the state which prepares its people to glorify war, which changes its country into barracks where marching feet are more important than intellect and reason, which teaches its citizens to live for a heroic death and not for a heroic life. [...]. If Hitler today knew positively, that he had to face a bloc of strong countries, which would defend freedom collectively, if he knew positively that he could not with impunity break unilateral [sic] treaties, undermine international law, he would in all probability give the matter forethought and the peace of the world would have greater chances.⁵⁵ (GW I, p. 84).

Although he does not actually address the problem of pacifism directly, Kaiser appears to feel instinctively that a pacifist position is valid for an individual pitted against a repressive system. Thus Tanaka chooses the non-violent path of the martyr, in order to publicise his protest against the regime; however, unlike the principled stand of the Woman in Masse Mensch or that of Friedrich Hall, not even a glimpse of any positive effects emerges from Tanaka's death. No-one, other than the judges, lawyers and officers present in the courtroom, hears his attack on the imperial order, apart from two guards who show no signs of dissent. Kaiser has long since abandoned the sort of idealism evident in Gilles und Jeanne, in which everyone-including figures of authority - is transformed by Gilles' exemplary confession. Tanaka attacks establishment figures directly with the truth and pays the price. In fact, his accusations are a precise demonstration of Toller's opening assertion in "Are we Responsible for Our Time?":

But what people fear most is that they may have to put into practice truths which wise men have discovered. Many people have to surrender old privileges and everybody has to give up old customs without which life may seem hardly worth living.⁵⁶

At the end of Der Soldat Tanaka the reaffirmed absolute dictatorial control of the Emperor is symbolised by his life-size portrait, which fills the empty courtroom with its overpowering presence; no thoughtful process appears to have been provoked in any of Tanaka's fellow soldiers who lead him off to his execution. While Tanaka makes a non-violent protest by exposing the truth behind the hypocrisy which upholds a political regime, Allan no longer protests out of a sense of hopeful indignation. Allan is free from the prejudices of the masses; unlike Tanaka he had never collaborated

with the existing order out of ignorance. He holds no hope that the masses will ever shake off their chains and cease to be collaboratory (a hope which Tanaka must hold, as he makes a pacifist protest). Allan's death is not pacifist, but nihilist, even though his body assumes the position of a crucified martyr after being stretched out in the boat by machine-gun fire. Paul Chaudraz, on the other hand, goes to his death full of hope for the future. He atones for his own violent acts by sacrificing himself and simultaneously protests against the violence in the world (Werke III, pp. 869-870). His self-sacrifice is more than expiation of his personal guilt, for it paves the way for a renewed mankind; he tells Noelle: "Lass' dein Kind nicht wissen, wie wir Unwürdigen waren. Lehr' es: der Erde würdig werden." (Werke III, p. 870).

Yet despite the non-violence of Tanaka and Allan - with their very different motivations - Kaiser does not reject violence outright. On a personal level, Tanaka's murder of not only the officer Umezu, but even of his sister, who leads a degrading existence as a prostitute, would suggest Kaiser accepts the idea of morally defensible killing. On a political level, Kaiser shows approval of armed struggle in Ein Arbeitsloser, though the Worker's destruction of the factory results only in the loss of his own life, apart from the extensive material damage he causes. Kaiser demonstrates, in this story, the second option open to the individual: though both Tanaka and the Worker of Ein Arbeitsloser deliberately choose death to make a statement, the latter decides to attack a violent regime with an act of violence himself. (Yet, as we have seen, the long-term effects of the Worker's act remain dubious, as the rigorously controlled

media report his protest as the deranged crime of a madman). This morally defensible violence contrasts starkly with the immoral, purely destructive violence of the Captain in Weizen ins Meer, who, like the Worker, sacrifices himself in order to complete an act of sabotage. The difference however, is that the Captain destroys a useful product intended to sustain life, purely in order to obey his instructions from above. The Worker consciously defies these instructions with the purpose of destroying munitions. It is through Baron Dergan that Kaiser expresses his most explicit support for the realistic idea of a future society in which violence is not a way of life, but in which it nevertheless plays its part in a defensive sense:

Es wird das Werkzeug mehr gelten als die Waffe. Doch wehe, wer eine Hand am Werk verhindern will - es würde diese Hand die Waffe furchtbarer schwingen als jede Hand vorher, um ihn, der blutig angriff, blutig zu vernichten.⁵⁷ (Werke III, p. 634).

This position corresponds very much to that occupied by Toller: peace should always remain a goal, but it should not be confused with passivity in the face of aggression. Kaiser also rejects appeasement of Nazi Germany in his letters. Though he does not take up this position until after the war has begun, it is incorrect to say that Kaiser never understood the necessity of armed force against Hitler.⁵⁸ The pacifism of individual figures such as Tanaka or Pastor Hall does not mean that Toller and Kaiser rejected force as a means to defeat Nazism. Such figures are individuals who have no real power at their disposal and consequently cannot use material force: their sole weapon is a moral idea which can succeed only in the long-term.

Before we move on to the final conclusions, let us briefly summarise the main points raised in this section.

We have seen that Toller keeps to his concept of the moral artist during the exile years, and that Kaiser also initially retains his own concept, but once abroad, approaches Toller's position. We can detect an element of ideological regression in Toller's work of these years, which is paralleled by an increasingly positive view of America; his ideas on pacifism and force remain constant, however. Kaiser confronts the causes of Nazism and war in both his stories and plays; the success of Nazism pushes him toward Toller's views on pacifism, and toward a political outlook held by Toller in the late 1920's. Despite his increasingly radical position, and despite his admiration for the Soviet war effort, Kaiser also sees America in a positive light. His letters reveal a continuing disdain for the masses, and this bitterness eventually cuts short Kaiser's development as a political writer in 1943. Toller never fails to stress the importance of social conditioning, but does not deny that the masses also bear responsibility for the rise of National Socialism.

Notes.

1. See for example Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, pp. 273-275. Marnette also detects such a development, but claims that Toller avoided contemporary problems in his literary work after Feuer aus den Kesseln (Untersuchungen zum Inhalt-Form-Problem, p. 344). Marnette would seem to be denying here that Nazism was a contemporary problem. Richard Dove maintains that shifts in Toller's ideological position "must be seen in the political context of the period," and emphasises certain elements of continuity in Toller's ideology during the exile years, such as his attitude to revolutionary pacifism. (Dove: Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller, pp. 430-444).
2. Huder, Walter: "Die politischen und sozialen Themen der Exil-Dramatik Georg Kaisers". In: Sinn und Form, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1961, p. 599.
3. Kesten, Hermann: Meine Freunde die Poeten. Donau, Vienna & Munich 1953, p. 157.
4. Dove, Richard: "Fenner Brockway and Ernst Toller: Document and Drama in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!'". In: German Life and Letters, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, October 1984, p. 53.
5. Ludwig, Emil: "Radionachricht von Ernst Tollers Tod". In: Das Neue Tagebuch, Vol. VII, No. 24, 10 June 1939, p. 572.
6. Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 400.
7. Aktionen, Bekenntnisse, Perspektiven. Berichte und Dokumente vom Kampf um die Freiheit des literarischen Schaffens in der Weimarer Republik. (Deutsche Akademie der Künste zu Berlin, ed.). Aufbau, Berlin & Weimar 1966, p. 513.
8. Toller: "Schriftsteller stellen sich". In: Die Linkskurve, Vol. IV, No. 8, August 1932, p. 3. Elsewhere, this faith in the workers is paralleled by an attack on the bourgeois domination of the League of Nations: "Solange nicht kapitalistisches Macht- und Profitstreben, solange nicht imperialistische Unterdrückungstendenzen als entscheidende politische Antriebe überwunden sind, ist der Völkerbund ein Traum..." (Toller: "Menschliche Komödie in Genf". In: Die Weltbühne, Vol. XXVIII, No. 11, 15 March 1932, p. 399)

9. George Grosz remembers Toller clinging to his faith in the working-class. In his memoirs, Grosz recalls an evening in Toller's home: "Der Schriftsteller Emil Ludwig war auch dabei, und wir hatten eine lebhaft Auseinandersetzung über die Chancen Hitlers, der gerade vor seiner Berufung zum Kanzler stand. Ludwig verließ sich auf Hindenburg und den konservativen Einfluß der Armee, Toller verließ sich auf die Arbeiterschaft..." (Grosz, George: Ein kleines Ja und ein großes Nein. Rowohlt, Hamburg 1955, p. 269).

10. Meyer, Peter: "Bericht aus Schottland". In: Der deutsche PEN-Club im Exil 1933-1948. Eine Ausstellung der Deutschen Bibliothek Frankfurt am Main. Bücherhändler-Vereinigung, Frankfurt a. M. 1980, p. 112.

11. Brecht takes a long-term view of the fight against Nazism. In his piece "The Other Germany" (1943), he claims that the masses, and not only their rulers, needed war in order to maintain their existence within a system which was geared toward waging war. Brecht sees the only answer in the radical alternative of social revolution: "The regime had to choose war because the whole people needed war; but the people needed war only under this regime and therefore have to look for another way of life. [...] Peoples [...] will establish popular government not when they grasp it with their minds but when they grasp it with their hands." (Brecht, Bertolt: Gesammelte Werke in acht Bänden VIII, Suhrkamp, Frankfurt a. M. 1967, pp. 843-845).

12. See Becher, Johannes R.: "Bürgerlicher Sumpf - Revolutionärer Kampf". In: Gesammelte Werke XV. (Johannes-R.-Becher-Archiv der Akademie der Künste der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik, ed.), Aufbau, Berlin & Weimar 1977, pp. 77-91.

13. Heinrich Mann to Lion Feuchtwanger. Quoted in: Walter, Hans-Albert: Deutsche Exilliteratur 1933-1950, Vol. VII, Luchterhand, Darmstadt 1974, p. 302.

14. In his book Der spanische Krieg, Ludwig Renn sees Toller as 'basically a communist', and goes on to describe Toller's lack of party allegiance as a root cause of the latter's despair and hopelessness during the later Thirties: "Er zählte nicht mehr zu den Anarchisten, sondern war im wesentlichen Kommunist geworden. [...] Nun stand er ohne den Halt da, den ihm die Kommunistische Partei mit ihrer Brüderlichkeit gegeben hätte. Dahin kommt ein Schriftsteller, wenn er keine gesellschaftliche Bindung mehr hat!" (Renn: Der spanische Krieg. Aufbau, Berlin 1956, p. 353). It is however quite possible that Renn, in describing

Toller as "im wesentlichen Kommunist," is referring to Toller's ideological position in the late Twenties; in any case, Renn would be unable to draw his rather moralising conclusion without claiming Toller was a socialist.

15. In 1935, in an article protesting against the imminent execution of Ernst Thälmann, Toller expresses the same idea: "Wenn morgen Thälmann, den Millionen zum Führer ihrer Interessen gewählt haben, dem Henker ausgeliefert werden soll, wird die Gerechtigkeit dem Henker ausgeliefert.

Wenn deutsche Pazifisten und Sozialisten wie Carl von Ossietzky, Torgler, Mierendorff, Neubauer und Litten, wenn die tausende namenloser Arbeiter, wenn deutsche Katholiken und Protestanten nur um ihrer Überzeugung und ihres Glaubens willen in Gefängnissen und Konzentrationslagern zugrunde gerichtet werden, dann geht diese Verfolgung uns alle an!" (Toller: "Thälmann unser Banner..." In: Einheit der Weltbewegung gegen imperialistischen Krieg und Faschismus, Vol. I, No. 7, May 1935, n.p.). It is characteristic of Toller during these years to see Thälmann not just as a workers' leader, but as one of the many different people persecuted by the Nazis.

16. Toller pleads on behalf of authors who do not fulfil the ideological requirements of the Soviet Union from a certain distance: there is a certain irony in this distant look at other undogmatic writers. Quite apart from the 'ideological shortcomings' pointed out by Marxist critics such as Reso and Kändler, Clara Zetkin had identified Toller as a non-revolutionary writer in a piece written in Moscow in 1926, when he first visited the USSR: "Der Dichter ist kein Kommunist, kein Revolutionär. [...] Dieser ist ausgesprochener bürgerlicher Pazifist und Individualist. [...] Wir grüßen den Dichter Ernst Toller als einen Vertreter des charakterisierten Intellektuellengeschlechts der Übergangszeit." (Zetkin, Clara: "Dem deutschen Dichter Ernst Toller bester Willkommensgruß". In: Weimarer Beiträge, Vol. XXII, No. 3, 1976, pp. 161-162). Zetkin is putting Toller into the very category which he describes from a distance in his 1934 speech to the Congress of Soviet Writers.

17. Altenhofer sees Wunder in Amerika as Toller's first work in which he stops dealing with proletarian problems. (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 273); she does not take account of the pessimism of 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!', as this play was not published until 1982.

18. In his memoirs, Ernst Niekisch claims to have been critical of Der entfesselte Wotan when imprisoned with Toller: "[Der entfesselte Wotan] war gegen den aufkommenden Nationalsozialismus gerichtet, erfaßte diesen jedoch nicht in seiner unheimlichen Gefährlichkeit. Der Entfesselte Wotan ist mehr ein Ulk als ein Signal kommenden Unheils und schauerlichen Verhängnisses." (Niekisch: Gewagtes Leben. Begegnungen und Begebnisse. Kiepenheuer & Witsch, Cologne & Berlin 1958, p. 103). Considering the play was written in 1923, it is hardly surprising that Wotan fails to 'predict' the full horror of Nazism. ("Reichskanzler Hitler", written in 1930, shows that Toller was hardly inclined to underestimate Nazism). Martin Reso also believes that Niekisch views Wotan with too much hindsight, but seemingly cannot help contradicting himself: "Richtig ist an der Bemerkung Niekisch' zweifellos der Vorwurf, daß Toller zu sehr die Persiflage in den Vordergrund stellt." (Reso: Der gesellschaftlich-ethische Protest im dichterischen Werk Ernst Tollers, p. 196). These comments are part of the tendency to view Wotan as a specific prediction of Nazism, rather than a satirical portrayal of the social and psychological conditions likely to give rise to totalitarian dictatorship. Rosemarie Altenhofer believes the parallel to Hitler should not be over-emphasised: "Dieses Werk erhält seine Bedeutung jedoch nicht durch 'Prophetie', wie es immer wieder fälschlich heißt [...] Die psychischen und sozialen Bedingungen, die Toller hier in satirischer Weise als Basis einer auf Massenhypnose aufbauenden politischen Bewegung präsentiert, die hier kritisierten Arten des Mitläufertums, haben auch Hitler möglich gemacht, aber sie gelten noch nach Hitler, trotz veränderter Verhältnisse." (Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, pp. 249-250). The comments of Niekisch and Reso serve to show just how perceptive Toller's analysis of the phenomena which characterised the rise of Nazism were.

19. Toller & Kesten, Hermann: Wunder in Amerika, Gustav Kiepenheuer, Berlin 1931 (mimeographed acting version), p. 50. (Hereafter cited as Wunder).

20. John Oxford is one such convert: "Sie waren der erste große Mensch, der mir in meinem Leben begegnet ist. Ich hasse Amerika, ich hasse die Dürftigkeit seiner gewöhnlichen Menschen..." (Wunder, p. 54).

21. Willibrand believes, quite wrongly, that capitalism loses all state power to the fascist dictatorship it sets up. (Willibrand: Ernst Toller and his Ideology, p. 47). Bütow, on the other hand, believes that Toller underestimates fascism's will to power (Der Konflikt, pp. 381-382), which is more realistically assessed

in "Reichskanzler Hitler": "[Die Nationalsozialistische Partei] wird es sich wohl gefallen lassen, auf demokratische Weise zur Macht zu gelangen, aber keinesfalls auf Geheiß der Demokratie sie wieder abgeben." (GW I, pp. 70-71).

22. We shall see that Kaiser portrays people and systems who stand to gain from war in his plays of the exile years, but he never actually specifies bourgeois capitalism as responsible for the rise of fascism. Even Der Soldat Tanaka, in which a brutal system perpetuates itself through economic repression, is a distanced attack on Nazism. Clearly Kaiser was not attacking Japan specifically (as he had been personally affected by Nazism, Kaiser no doubt had Germany in mind when writing Tanaka), but there is some justification to the Japanese setting. The moral standards throughout the play - the demoralising nature of prostitution, for example - are Western (Manfred Kuxdorf believes the play to be pervaded by Western morality; Kuxdorf: Die Suche nach dem Menschen, p. 41), but the Emperor-as-god is oriental in concept. Furthermore, the oppressed are peasants, not members of an industrial proletariat; the system is built on feudal, rather than bourgeois capitalist lines. Kaiser's work from the years 1938-1943 is distinctly politicised, but ironically, the overt criticism of capitalism evident in the Gas plays and in several works of the 1920's (Nebeneinander, Gats and Mississippi) is not followed up in the exile plays.

23. Bütow: Der Konflikt zwischen Revolution und Pazifismus im Werk Ernst Tollers, pp. 387-388.

24. No More Peace! A Thoughtful Comedy by Ernst Toller. John Lane. The Bodley Head, London 1937, p. 103.

25. Altenhofer believes the fact that Marx, unlike such diverse historical figures as Napoleon and St. Francis, has not been permitted to enter Heaven, shows disapproval of a philosophy which claimed to be able to change the world. (Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 295). This conclusion however, does not allow for Francis' approval of the Marx quotation at the end of the English version. It is quite possible that Marx has been sent to Hell for his atheism. Such an idea is supported by the brief mention of Darwin, whose evolutionary theories also challenged the traditional Christian viewpoint. Darwin, however, has repented and is due to broadcast a talk on Heavenly radio entitled: "'Mein Irrtum auf Erden. Warum der Mensch nicht vom Affen abstammt.'" (GW III, p. 187). Altenhofer feels that St. Francis' endorsement of the Marx quotation

is evidence of Toller's wish to show its meaninglessness. She supports this idea with the final lines from Nationalsozialismus, in which Toller confronts the Nazi Mühr with the same quotation: Mühr agrees with it before Toller reveals its source. According to Altenhofer, Toller is pointing out just how open to interpretation such phrases are. (Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 283). While this idea is interesting, it fails to take account of the sympathetic portrayal of St. Francis (he is hardly Mühr's counterpart), and of the transformation which St. Francis undergoes from passive to active pacifist.

26. Willibrand: "The Timely Dramas of Ernst Toller". In: Monatshefte Vol. XXXIX, No. 3, 1947, p. 165.

27. Significantly, in the English version the 'clever' are contrasted with the 'wise'. Noah is wise, so wise in fact that Socrates expresses the desire to become his disciple.

28. Bormann, Alexander von: "'Wohltönend, aber dumm'? Die Stimme der Kultur im Widerstand." In: Amsterdamer Beiträge zur neueren Germanistik, Vol. I, 1972, p. 160: "Ansätze zu einer Faschismus-Deutung finden sich nirgends."

29. This individual dissent is shown not only by Hofer, Hall and Grotjahn, but by Heinrich Degen, who, disillusioned by the excesses of Nazism, loses his life while enabling Hall to escape from the concentration camp.

30. Marnette: Untersuchungen zum Inhalt-Form-Problem, p. 362.

31. Ibid., p. 366.

32. Underground socialist opposition to the Third Reich co-existed with ethically motivated resistance: Stauffenberg was an officer of the Wehrmacht, and the group of Munich students gathered around Hans and Sophie Scholl, code-named Die Weiße Rose, were chiefly influenced by Christian ideals.

33. Huder, Walter: "Nachwort", SEAG, pp. 786-787: "Das Skizzenbuch dieser Zeit enthält Notizen von Stoffen, die nach dem Urteil des Autors nur episch zu bewältigen waren."

34. Kaiser, who was constantly in financial difficulty during his years in Switzerland, who found himself relying on the meagre gifts of friends such as von Arx and Julius Marx, felt the material waste of war acutely (and, characteristically, expresses the effects

of this waste in personal terms): "Wenn ich nur das Geld einer einzigen Kriegssekunde hätte, ich brauchte bis ins fünfte Glied nicht mehr zu dichten." (Briefe, p. 1055).

35. Schmutz' perverse pride in the War is clearly seen as unreasoning madness; Toller also portrayed the rise of Nazism as the rise of something intrinsically irrational: "Ja, die Unvernunft ist aufgestanden in Europa..." (GW I, p. 191).

36. As late as 1944 Kaiser admitted to being driven by hatred, and expressed doubts as to whether any creative impetus could emerge from it: "Ich produziere unter Haßzuständen. Ist der Haß ein guter Dung ein guter Mist für Wachstum? Vielleicht - vielleicht auch nicht." (Briefe, pp. 1019-1020). Elsewhere, when not applied to himself, Kaiser sees hatred purely as a destructive force, but also as something innate to man; he describes it as "der Menschheit ureigenster Besitz." (Briefe, p. 825).

37. Schürer: "Verinnerlichung, Protest and Resignation...", p. 272.

38. LWJB VI, p. 288.

39. Helt, Richard C.: "Die Vermassung des neuen Menschen; zum Soldat Tanaka von Georg Kaiser." In: Neophilologus, Vol. LXIII, 1979, pp. 279-284. In both this article (p. 283), and his dissertation (Untersuchungen zum Pessimismus in den sozialen Dramen Georg Kaisers. Unpubl. diss., Washington University 1972, p. 88), Helt postulates that Kaiser blames capitalism per se in Tanaka for dehumanisation and alienation in society, rather than the effects of industrialisation. However, as we saw in Chapter I, Kaiser never actually assaults industrialism without linking it to capitalism.

40. Ibid., p. 284.

41. Kaiser based Das Floß der Medusa on the torpedoing of the City of Benares in 1940, which was carrying British children being evacuated to Canada. The play itself is prefaced by the following lines: "Im September 1940 wurde der Dampfer, der Kinder aus bombardierten Städten von England nach Kanada bringen sollte, auf hoher See torpediert. Nur wenige Kinder entrannen in Rettungsbooten dem Tode." (Werke III, p. 771). Armin Arnold shows that Kaiser probably read about the City of Benares in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung (Arnold: Die Literatur des Expressionismus. Sprachliche und thematische Quellen. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, Berlin, Cologne & Mainz 1966, pp. 124-125). The City of Benares

was not the first evacuee ship to be attacked that month: only a few weeks earlier a liner also bound for Canada was sunk, but all 321 children on board survived and were returned safely to Scotland, as The Scotsman reports. (The Scotsman, 2 September 1940, p. 5).

42. Armin Arnold sees the fate of Fückslein as symbolic of that of the Jews (Arnold: Die Literatur des Expressionismus, pp. 129-130); certainly the methods used by the strong-willed Ann over the impressionable and superstitious other children - with the aim of getting rid of Fückslein, who, because of his weakness, becomes a scapegoat - bear microcosmic resemblance to Toller's analysis of Nazi race policy. In order to impose their will on the masses, the Nazis invented the myth of the Aryan race, Toller asserts, and proves his point by showing how not even Nazi race research can remotely justify Hitler's vindictive scapegoat policy. (LWJB VI, pp. 285-286 & pp. 293-295). Even though Arnold points out that Fückslein's fate parallels that of the Jews, he finds the play somewhat unbelievable, as Ann, the mother-figure who distributes milk to the others, should protect the smallest passenger, not kill him. (Arnold, p. 133). However, Fückslein is singled out because he is weak, small and different, which inspires fear and prejudice in Ann; her protective mothering is reserved for her own kind. Arnold's arguments are unconvincing because any regime which uses terror must be able to condition perfectly 'normal' people to apply it.

43. Perhaps it is the lack of Expressionist pathos in the stories which leads Armin Arnold to dismiss them; he remarks about SEAG: "Wenn die Anthologie etwas beweist, dann die Tatsache, daß Kaisers Qualitäten in seinen Dramen und sonst nirgends zu suchen sind." (Arnold: "Der Status Georg Kaisers". In: Frankfurter Hefte, Vol. XXIV, No. 7, 1969, p. 504).

44. We learn in the opening paragraph of the story that the protagonist's father has always had financial worries and has been sent into exile. Kaiser's son Laurent, like the protagonist, was conscripted into the Wehrmacht.

45. Huder: "Nachwort", SEAG, p. 787.

46. Welzeck describes the massed marching below him thus: "Auf allen Straßen marschiert es. [...] Es gibt keine Unterbrechung. Es beginnt nicht und endet nicht. Als kröche ein vielleibiger Wurm von einer Höhle in die andere - und Kopf und Schwanz sind schon verschwunden. [...] Nun sehe ich in Gesichter. Sie

verschmelzen zu einem und sind unterschiedslos gleich." (Werke IV, pp. 512513).

47. Gerhard P. Knapp thinks Welzeck's refusal to acknowledge the social causes of war is indicative of Kaiser's own ambivalent political attitudes. (Knapp, Gerhard P.: "Die Prosa Georg Kaisers: Beiträge zu ihrer Deutung und werkgeschichtlichen Erschließung." In: LGW-Interpretationen 49, p. 148). However, it is quite clear from the text itself, that Welzeck deliberately turns his back on the economic division which does not fit into his concept of heroic warfare; the social causes of war are quite intentionally not explored, once they have been alluded to by Welzeck, because the whole story is told from the airman's point of view. It is this narrative stance which prompted Jürgen Zenke to include Leutnant Welzeck in his study, Die deutsche Monologergzählung im 20. Jahrhundert, Boehlau, Cologne & Vienna 1976. (The relevant chapter is entitled: "Die Selbstächtung des Kriegers: Georg Kaisers Leutnant Welzeck", pp. 93-115). Zenke also accuses Kaiser of failure to take up the economic causes of war (p. 114), although he points out another problem with Leutnant Welzeck: why did Kaiser make his militaristic figure a Czech if he meant to attack German fascism, especially as he was living safely in Switzerland when he wrote it? It is true that Leutnant Welzeck was written at the time when Czechoslovakia was occupied by Nazi Germany, and in the story Welzeck and his country are waiting for a German attack, i.e. they are preparing for a defensive war. Zenke sees Leutnant Welzeck as a kind of sequel to Ächtung des Kriegers, in which the military mind, exposed in its fanaticism by the stream of consciousness style of the story, invites condemnation. While this is no doubt true, the question - why Kaiser should choose to attack militarism via a figure who is waiting to wage the defensive war Kaiser declares so morally supportable in his letters - nevertheless remains unresolved.

48. Huder, Walter: "Die politischen und sozialen Themen der Exil-Dramatik Georg Kaisers." In: Sinn und Form, Vol. XIII, No. 4, 1961, p. 602.

49. Durzak, Manfred: "Der 'Zwang zur Politik': Georg Kaiser und Stephan Hermlin im Exil." In: Monatshefte, Vol. LXVII, No. 4, 1976, p. 377.

50. The figure of Christ also appears in the drama-sketch Eine Art Faust (1944), in which a God, sickened by humanity, refuses to listen to the arguments of successive messiahs, the first of whom is Christ. The other two are Vincent van Gogh and "Georg". (Eine Art Faust. In: Middell, Eike & Henning, Hans (eds.):

Faust. Eine Anthologie. Reclam, Leipzig 1975, p. 288).

The identification of the artist with Christ also recurs in the poems Kaiser wrote during the final year of his life; martyrdom and self-sacrifice dominate works like "Die große Kreuzigung" and "Selbstopfer".

At about the same time that the fragment Jesus was written, Kaiser was toying with the idea of a "Göttliche Tragödie," an outline of which he included in a letter to Caesar von Arx (Briefe, pp. 566-568), written on 5 December 1940. The conclusion to the drama was to be that of Der Kurgast Jesus: God, Christ, Mary and Joseph flee mankind. It is no doubt significant that Kaiser did not write this play, as it was conceived when he was writing plays which confronted reality and displayed sympathy with the masses. Julius Marx, whose perception of the role and function of art was rather close to that of Toller, tried to persuade Kaiser to make his planned "Göttliche Tragödie" more immediately relevant to contemporary events. Interestingly, Marx' suggestions include the introduction of a Pastor Niemöller figure, who also inspired Toller to write Pastor Hall: "Wenn Sie wert darauf legen, daß ein solches Stück aufgeführt wird, - denn nur auf diese Weise vermögen Sie wirkungsvoll den Schmutz unseres Zeitalters zu beleuchten - dann sollten Sie versuchen, die Jesus-Legende zu aktualisieren und damit den Mißerfolg der Sendung Jesus' unter Beweis stellen. [...] Ein zweites Mal nach zweitausend Jahren kommt der Wächter wieder zu Gott---- Dieses Mal schickt er Jesus zur Erde nieder. Die ihn riefen (die Geistlichen sind zu feig zu ihm zu stehen, als die große Bestie seine Beseitigung verlangt [...]). Ein Pastor, nur einer (Niemöller), setzt sich für Jesus ein, - wird aber vor der Kirche vom Pöbel ausgepiffen und dann verhaftet. [...]"

Es ist vielleicht anmaßend von mir, Ihnen solche Vorschläge zu machen und den Ernst Ihres Entwurfes durch Verquickung mit dem Zeitgeschehen zu profanieren. Aber Sie wissen ja: ich denke auch in der Kunst praktisch, - in diesem Falle auf Kosten der Kunst und zu Gunsten der von ihr angestrebten Wirkung." (Unpublished letter dated 20 January 1941, GKA). It is conceivable that Marx' demands for realistic, engaged drama influenced Kaiser during the early 1940's.

51. See for example Durzak: "Der 'Zwang zur Politik'...", and Kieser, Rolf: Erzwungene Symbiose. Thomas Mann, Robert Musil, Georg Kaiser und Bertolt Brecht im Schweizer Exil. Paul Haupt, Berne & Stuttgart 1984. See also Kieser's article: "'Gedicht ist das Gespräch mit toten Dingen.' Georg Kaiser im Schweizer Exil". In: Schweizer Monatshefte, Vol. LVI, No. 9, December 1976, pp. 797-810. Klaus Petersen, in discussing Rosamunde Floris, links this play to statements Kaiser made late in his exile in which he expressed the desire to escape

sordid reality (Petersen: "Georg Kaisers Rosamunde Floris: Der Engel mit dem Flammenschwert". In: Seminar, Vol. XIII, No. 1, February 1977, p. 24). However, such interpretations only tell half the story, for between Rosamunde Floris and the last two years of Kaiser's life lie such works as Der Soldat Tanaka, Napoleon in New Orleans, Ein Arbeiter and Ein Arbeitsloser.

52. Toller: "Das Verhör". In: Die neue Weltbühne, Vol. XXXII, No. 7, 13 February 1936, pp. 204-205.

53. Unpublished letter to Ludwig Speth, dated 4 July 1928. Sammlung Ernst Toller.

54. This is the only direct endorsement of violence by a sympathetically-portrayed character in Toller's dramatic work; it is ironic that this is the case, as the exile plays do not deal primarily with revolutionary problems.

55. Willibrand believes that Toller never advocated force against Hitler, citing a letter Toller wrote to The New York Times. (Willibrand: Ernst Toller and his Ideology, p. 41). In his letter (The New York Times, Vol. LXXXVI, 19 October 1936, p. 18), Toller corrects an article which had misquoted him: "I did not say: 'The democracies must unite together and make war on Hitler.' I said: 'The democracies must unite together to preserve peace. That is the only way to fight the danger of war which threatens the world today.'" This statement amounts to a rejection of pre-emptive force, but not of force per se. Elsewhere Toller makes quite clear that the democracies should use force if Hitler were to begin invading neighbouring countries: "The only way to prevent him is if he knows that he would have the united world against him which is willing to punish the attacker." (GW I, p. 84). In an unpublished manuscript of a book about Spain, Toller explains that his motivation for starting the Spanish Relief Fund lay in his feelings of guilt over not having joined the International Brigades at the outbreak of the Civil War; this confession also means that Toller considered the use of force in Spain to be morally defensible: "Ende Juli 1938, nach zwei Jahren Krieg, kam ich nach Spanien. Ich hatte das Land vor dem Kriege gekannt, hatte dort gelebt und seine Menschen lieb gewonnen. Als der Krieg begann und die ersten Freiwilligen nach Spanien eilten, wollte auch ich es tun. Mögen die Gründe, die mich daran hinderten, noch so zwingend sein, ich ließ sie vor meinem Gewissen nicht gelten, jetzt war ich hier, ich fühlte, ich hatte eine Schuld gut zu machen." (This passage from the unpublished fragments of Toller's Spanienbuch appears in FT, p. 219).

56. LWJB VI, p. 296.

57. Schürer presumably does not consider this defensive violence when he maintains that pacifism is one of the traits of Kaiser's exile work which remains constant. (Schürer: "Verinnerlichung, Protest and Resignation...", p. 278).

58. Hans-Jürgen Schultze believes Kaiser occupied an unrealistic position with regard to the war: "Sein umfassender Pazifismus verwehrte Kaiser das Verständnis dafür, daß der 2. Weltkrieg nicht durch ein Wunder, sondern nur durch Waffengewalt zu beenden war." (Schultze, Hans-Jürgen: Die Exildramen Georg Kaisers - Untersuchungen zur antifaschistischen Grundhaltung des spätbürgerlichen Künstlers und ihre Problematik. Unpubl. diss., Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena 1971, p. 236). Curiously, Schultze ignores the sketches and stories, even though these are discussed by Huder in his articles, "Der Epiker Georg Kaiser" and "Die politischen und sozialen Themen der Exil-Dramatik Georg Kaisers", which appeared in the GDR periodical Sinn und Form in 1960 and 1961 respectively. Schultze does not list these articles in his bibliography even though he claims, in a "Nachbemerkung" (n.p.), to have experienced difficulty in locating material. The fact that Kaiser believed Nazi Germany had to be countered forcefully emerges not only explicitly from the letters in which he expresses exasperation over Allied progress, and implicitly from bitter asides such as "Neutralität ist praktisch - aber ehrlos" (Briefe, pp. 1000-1001), but, as Armin Arnold points out, from the difference between the original concept and the actual form of Das Floß der Medusa. (Arnold: Die Literatur des Expressionismus, pp. 125-126). This play, in which the children were originally to accuse the irrational, violent world of adults, was conceived as an absolute pacifist condemnation of war; Kaiser only included the figures of Ann and Fückslein later.

Chapter VI

CONCLUSIONS

In the first section of this study we saw how the work of both Toller and Kaiser develops considerably during the Weimar years and that there are many parallels in the development of both writers. The exile years certainly confirm the idea that Kaiser, like Toller, underwent developments which can be chronologically defined. While the development of Kaiser's oeuvre is characterised by fluctuations and contradictions, we must reject Armin Arnold's claim that there is no pattern to Kaiser's work: "Kaisers Werke sind also alles andere als ein Spiegel einer geradlinigen Entwicklung oder eines geistigen Wachsens, sondern - grob gesagt - Zufallsprodukte, nicht in der Ausführung, aber in der Thematik."¹ Generally, we can conclude that Kaiser's views become increasingly realistic and approach those of Toller, though there are significant setbacks in 1933 and 1943.

Kaiser often does not incorporate the conclusions of one play into the next. Development in Kaiser's work can only be traced when we consider his oeuvre as a whole and pinpoint the general trend of each phase of writing. The parallel despair and ecstasy evident in Gas II and Hölle Weg Erde respectively show how Kaiser could oscillate, but these plays give way - via Nebeneinander and Gats - to a sharper, more realistic portrayal of social reality in the late 1920's and early 1930's. The attacks on militarism in Die Lederköpfe and Ächtung des Kriegers show that this development was influenced by the rise of Nazism.

The latter play is rather ambiguous in its attitude toward repression and authority, yet was written after Die Lederköpfe. Nevertheless, the fact that Mississippi and Der Silbersee followed shows that, in general, Kaiser moved toward Toller's concept of power as corrupt and repressive. A greater sympathy toward revolution also emerges over the years, parallel to the increasingly realistic portrayal of social circumstances in Kaiser's work. The cynicism toward social change displayed in Schellenkönig is never really equalled again, except by the Billionaire, whose anti-social viewpoint is corrected by his son in Gas. Furthermore, the revolutionary-from-above disappears from Kaiser's work, a development which is adhered to during the exile years.² The politicisation of Kaiser's work was suddenly interrupted in 1933, but taken up with greater consequence in 1938.

Walter Huder's idea that Kaiser concentrated on a virtually apolitical portrayal of war in his exile drama naturally endorses rather than disqualifies the notion that Kaiser underwent some sort of traceable ideological development, but must also be rejected upon close inspection of several of the plays written between 1938 and 1943. Kaiser's radical politicisation is most evident in his stories, but the drama produced in these years also shows considerable ideological progress over the social dramas of the Expressionist period and the mid-Twenties. The charge of ideological regression can only be levelled at Kaiser with regard to Zweimal Amphitryon and Die Spieldose, plays which form a link between the political works and the drama and poetry of the last year of his life in which escape from reality is once again sought, rather than confrontation. Kaiser's politicisation, culminating in the radical socialism advocated in Ein Arbeiter, is not tempered

by the practical considerations which no doubt influenced Toller's public political standpoint. Toller wanted to see broad, united opposition to Nazi Germany; he appealed not only to artists and intellectuals, but directly to the nations who were soon to be embroiled in bloody conflict.

The fact that Toller develops ideologically through the years has never been doubted, though it has often not been fully shown. Dorothea Klein ignores the exile years and therefore the charge of ideological regression. Even Richard Dove's otherwise comprehensive study does not do justice to the years 1930-33,³ during which Rosemarie Altenhofer, for example, detects a shift in Toller's ideology.⁴ Toller's imaginative work after 1930 shows a distinct move away from problems of the revolutionary proletariat, but - with the exception of Die blinde Göttin - continues to attack capitalism, a trend which endures into the mid-Thirties when he wrote Nie wieder Friede!. Yet even this play and Pastor Hall, the two dramatic works he wrote in exile, contain perceptible endorsements of revolution. Although a clear line of ideological development can be traced through Toller's work, it is also by no means entirely smooth. The commitment to socialism grows in stature in his early plays, but suffers a severe setback in Hinkemann, before being taken up again in later plays, only to be doubted once again in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!'. The charge of ideological regression in the 1930's is to some extent justified, but it must be remembered that many other artists considered the fight against fascism more important than the fight for socialism. It must also be borne in mind that Toller's attitudes toward pacifism and force, as well as toward socially and politically aware art, remained constant until the end of his life, that these views

were in fact given a greater relevance by the challenge of Nazism.

Both Toller and Kaiser rose to this political challenge, but in different ways. Toller became an even more active campaigner: there is a distinct shift toward public speaking from 1933 onward. Kaiser, once in Switzerland, attacked Hitler's regime in a whole series of plays and stories. Both writers initially keep to what they had perceived to be the artist's moral obligation in the Twenties, yet each violates the principles of the other.

In Kaiser's work, this 'violation' of the political responsibility which Toller considers so important, is particularly marked in the years 1933-38. Clearly, it must not be forgotten that Kaiser wanted to avoid persecution of himself and his family, and that he wanted to secure a living during these years. Nonetheless, Kaiser's letters betray a feeling that the Nazi regime was a temporary "Tierzeit" (Klawitter: Werke VI, p. 319) which had to be patiently endured, rather than opposed; his attempts to get work published after 1933 show he underestimated a regime the true aims of which he only began to comprehend fully once in Swiss exile, though the agitational poems of Die Gasgesellschaft bear witness to his true sentiments about Nazism and foreshadow the politicisation his work was to undergo in Switzerland. Once abroad, Kaiser never became the politically active man Toller considers to be the true revolutionary writer; however, not only was Kaiser in a fairly isolated position in Switzerland, and not only would such political involvement hardly have been tolerated by the Swiss authorities, but such direct action would have been out of character. What Kaiser had to say, he said in his imaginative writing:

by politicising his work after 1938, he at least partially met Toller's definition of the moral/political artist. Instrumental in bringing about this politicisation was Kaiser's adoption of Toller's idea of socially involved art.

Although Toller violates Kaiser's original idea of the artist's duty being first and foremost to the production of literary work, he nevertheless constantly emphasises, as a part of his anti-fascist campaigning, the long-term effect art is capable of having. By contrast, Kaiser's relentless pursuit of literary production was accompanied by serious doubts - both before and after 1933 - as to its value. Toller's political involvement thus paradoxically gave him a more consistently positive view of art's validity, even though it meant the quantity of creative, imaginative work was, in consequence, restricted.

The theme of flight from reality, the abstract nature of his revolutionary plays and the 'Denkspieler' myth all contributed to the critical idea that Kaiser was never really socially concerned. While flight is a prominent theme, the point is often missed that many protagonists who turn their back on the world escape a socially repressive reality, as in Zweimal Oliver or Mississippi. Social repression, in other words, can produce revolutionaries (Olim and Severin), or simply victims who seek to escape (Krehler and Oliver). Toller, who was concerned to show a proletarian figure with the insight and capability to do something about his surroundings, usually shows revolutionaries, but in Hinkemann portrays a victim of social misery, who, however, is too much a part of his social environment to escape as Oliver or Kehoe do. Kaiser also features protagonists who escape from a reality which is not

necessarily socially repressive, but, with the exception of Catherine in Oktobertag (1927),⁵ these figures chiefly populate plays which were written between 1933 and 1938, and during Kaiser's final reclusive and disillusioned phase (1943-45). There are, in other words, identifiable points in time where Kaiser chose to emphasise the theme of flight, and these are at least partially influenced by his own material circumstances.

Critics also belittle Kaiser's social concern because of the abstract nature of his revolutionary plays. Toller's political experience is reflected in his dramatic work, but Kaiser had no such experience: his revolutionary plays are influenced by the reality around him, but are nevertheless products of his imagination. To that extent they can be termed 'Denkspiele', though his bias and support for the revolutionary idea (apart from in Gats, where it is flawed) is almost always clear. The abstract nature of Kaiser's revolutions can lead to their lacking credibility. They are often revolutions which are 'made', their propagators are isolated within a society which requires change, but is not aware of this. That Toller knew revolutions are preceded by historical crises is reflected in his drama: the First World War precedes change in Die Wandlung and in Masse Mensch; it is also the cause of revolutionary ferment in Feuer aus den Kesseln. In Hoppla!, society has stabilised, so such revolutionary upheaval is no longer possible. In Kaiser's work, revolutions are attempted within a society which is not necessarily healthy, but which is materially stable. In Hölle Weg Erde just such a revolution succeeds, but in Gas and Mississippi it does not. In Die Bürger von Calais a lost war has created the breeding-ground for Eustache's ideas, which is why his revolution is more convincing than that of Spazierer. In Der

Silbersee Olim and Severin cannot simply initiate a revolution out of the blue, because Luber and Laur have - for the present - ensured the triumph of the old order. The collapse of Kehoe's isolated protest and the inability of Olim and Severin to 'make' a revolution further exemplify the growth of realism in Kaiser's late Weimar work; yet even Der Silbersee ends with a promise of utopia. The similarity between the development of Toller and Kaiser is chiefly restricted to the identification and representation of social problems: they diverge on the suggested 'solutions'. Toller is capable of cautious and sober optimism even after the continued disappointments of the revolutionary aspirations of his heroes, but Kaiser can only reach a socially optimistic conclusion by retaining the vague hopes of his Expressionist plays: when even these 'solutions' are addressed realistically, Kaiser's work often ends on a pessimistic note. Even Tanaka makes an absolute protest in the face of overwhelming odds and consequently inspires no imitators, while the Worker of Ein Arbeitsloser cannot make his protest heard in a society in which the media are ruthlessly controlled. The exception is the Worker of Ein Arbeiter: like Olim and Severin, he chooses the path of slow, carefully planned resistance, but he achieves the realistic goals that Kroll and Köbis have within their sights.

In the final analysis, neither writer was shielded from disillusionment by his ideological position. Kaiser fled into the personal solace his art could provide him, whereas Toller's constant public campaigning left him extremely unhappy and dissatisfied on a personal level.⁶ Nevertheless, Toller clung throughout his life to a warm affection for humanity, although he was aware of its frailties and shortcomings. Kaiser,

on the other hand, always maintained a rather derisive attitude toward mankind, even when his work portrayed the masses positively. His letters show that the depiction of ordinary men and women in his drama of the years 1938-1943 is not infused with affection. Kaiser's sudden turn away from the masses in his work must be seen as an expression of his real views; his work between 1938 and 1943 represents an extended and successful, but ultimately artificial, attempt to portray simple people in a positive light. Toller believed a faith in mankind devoid of affection could only lead to disappointment and a disillusioned hatred of man. In 1921 he wrote to Stefan Zweig:

Sie sagen von Romain Rolland, daß er 'die Menschheit liebt, weil er mehr Mitleid für sie hat als Glauben an sie'. Vielleicht ist diese Liebe die einzig beharrliche und unverbitterte. Wird Der Glaube oft enttäuscht, und er muß enttäuscht werden, wandelt er sich in Feindschaft, Verbitterung, Menschheitshaß. (GW V, pp. 57-58).

Despite his repeated efforts to the contrary, Kaiser ultimately finds it impossible to enter the fray of real political conflict. While Toller believes simple, 'naive' political solutions to be possible,⁷ he perceives a need to engage in political battle - though certainly not as an end in itself. He describes politics as a means to destroy modern political conflict. From prison he wrote to a worker:

Lieben wir den Kampf um des Kampfes willen? Nein. Der Kampf ist ein Mittel, wie die Politik ein Mittel ist. Ohne Kampf, ohne Politik sind wir das Eisen, auf das der Hammer schlägt. Wir aber müssen der Hammer werden, der das Eisen formt.

Träumen wir nicht von einer Gemeinschaft, die sich nicht mehr in den minderwertigen Kämpfen der Politik zerreibt, ja, die vom Berufspolitiker als gesellschaftlichem Typus befreit ist? Von einer Gemeinschaft, die

ohne Hunger und ohne Angst, dem edlen Glück,
dem edlen Leid lebt? (GW V, p. 117).

Years later, when addressing a Congress of writers
in London, Toller reiterated the same idea:

Wir lieben die Politik nicht um ihrer selbst
willen. Wir nehmen heute teil am politischen
Leben, aber wir glauben, daß es nicht der
geringste Sinn unserer Kämpfe ist, die künftige
Menschheit von dem trostlosen Interessenstreit,
der heute 'Politik' genannt wird, zu befreien.
(GW I, pp. 197-198).

Kaiser could never reconcile his ideals with political
reality in this way: he no doubt often felt that political
events merely reflected man's innate depravity, and
could never quite believe that he could influence
man for the better by entering the political arena.
In the short-term Kaiser was right, for the "trostloser
Interessenstreit" which Toller wished to abolish finally
left him exhausted and devoid of hope.

Notes.

1. Arnold, Armin: "Der Status Georg Kaisers". In: Frankfurter Hefte, Vol. XXIV, No. 7, 1969, p. 511.
2. In Kaiser's final two plays, Pygmalion and Bellerophon, the artist is portrayed as a being distinctly superior to his fellow men, but he is not a revolutionary and does not seek to change society.
3. Dove deals with 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!', Wunder in Amerika and Die blinde Göttin rather superficially. (Dove: Revolutionary Socialism in the Work of Ernst Toller, pp. 365-366). He does however look at 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!' in more depth in his article "Fenner Brockway and Ernst Toller: Document and Drama in 'Berlin - letzte Ausgabe!'". In: German Life and Letters, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 1, October 1984, pp. 44-56.
4. Altenhofer: Ernst Tollers politische Dramatik, p. 400.
5. In Oktobertag, Catherine places her own subjective version of reality against objective truth and persuades the officer Jean-Marc Marrien to join her in this illusory world. While the theme of class division is touched upon, Catherine's flight is not socially motivated, as she herself comes from a privileged background. Oktobertag pre-empts the series of plays Kaiser wrote during the first five years of Nazi rule, in which an other-worldly romantic love is defended against the reality which threatens it. These plays are virtually devoid of social implications. Critics have often missed the fact that Oktobertag stands alone in the plays of the late Twenties: B.J. Kenworthy, for example, includes this work alongside Rosamunde Floris (1936-37), Alain und Elise (1937) and Der Gärtner von Toulouse (1937-38) in his chapter "The Triumph of the Mind" (Kenworthy: Georg Kaiser), as does Ernst Schürer in his chapter "Worlds of the Mind" (Schürer: Georg Kaiser).
6. Oskar Maria Graf suggests that Toller - like Kaiser at times - saw in his art a chance to escape the harshness of reality. Graf makes his comment when seeking to explain Toller's own statement that he had been happy in prison: "Er sagte mir einmal, daß er damals wirklich glücklich gewesen sei. Das mag unglaublich klingen. Unbestreitbar aber lebte er in jenen Jahren der Haft so intensiv in der Welt seiner Dichtung, daß ihm die Widrigkeit der ihn umgebenden Wirklichkeit nichts anhaben konnte." (Graf, Oskar Maria: "Gedenkrede auf

Ernst Toller". In: Sinn und Form, Vol. XXI, No. 4, July 1969, p. 898). Prison gave Toller the chance to dedicate himself to his art, which provided him with solace in a place not normally associated with personal happiness. Yet these plays deal with political reality first and foremost: they are hardly avenues of escape.

7. Toller defends idealistic goals in politics which appear naive, because he feels that conflicts are less complicated than they are generally believed to be: "But fortunately all the essential truths of life are simple, and that gives one reason to hope that in the long run they may be realised." (Toller: "The Modern Writer and the Future of Europe". In: The Bookman, Vol. LXXXV, January 1934, p. 382).

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I certify that this dissertation has been composed
by myself, and that it is the result of my own work.